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THE

HOLY BIBLE

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION (A.D. 1611),

WITH AN EXPLANATORY AND CRITICAL

Commentary

AND

A Revision of the Translation,

BY BISHOPS AND OTHER CLERGY

OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH.

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EDITED

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VOL. V.

ISAIAH—JEREMIAH—LAMENTATIONS.

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I. *Introductory Remarks on the Prophetical Books.*

§ 1. THE title "PROPHETS" covers a larger space in the Hebrew Bible than it does in our own. It there includes the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel I and II, and Kings I and II, which are called the *Former* Prophets; while the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel[1] with the twelve shorter books are called the *Latter* Prophets. Thus the "Prophets," standing between the Pentateuch and the Hagiographa, formed the middle, and considerably the bulkiest portion of the Hebrew Old Testament.

This arrangement has the advantage of keeping prominently before the mind the true nature both of the historical narratives and of the prophetic function itself.

(1) The histories were intended to shew in what relation Israel stood, at each successive period, to its fundamental constitution as laid down in the Pentateuch;—how far they were advancing

[1] As Daniel did not prophesy directly to Israel, (his mission had a far wider range), his book is placed in the Hebrew Bible in the Third Division, the Hagiographa; which includes all the sacred writings besides the "Law" and the "Prophets."

towards, or receding from, the high purpose of their vocation, as the Holy People, through whom blessedness should be diffused over all the nations of the earth;—and in what ways their Invisible King exercised His gracious authority among them; rewarding, encouraging, punishing, leading to repentance, delivering; providing ever anew fresh safeguards and additional motives of obedience; until all the resources of long-suffering goodness had been tried in vain, and judgment was at last pronounced upon the unfaithful nation.

(2) And it was the function of the prophets to be God's envoys, to explain to the people the design of the several acts of His administration; to vindicate His righteousness; to make in His name renewed offers of mercy; to republish the fundamental truths of the Law; to reassert the obligations of the Covenant; and, at last, when the period of probation was drawing to its end and sentence of exile and excommunication had been passed in the court of heaven, then to declare aloud before heaven and earth, that in spite of man's unfaithfulness God's loving purposes should not be frustrated; that His promise of salvation for the whole world should yet be made good by means of a Person whom He had ordained, One who should be Son of David, Son of Abraham, and Son of God.

Thus the two series of the "Prophets" combined set forth the entire issue of the Sinaitic Covenant. The "Former" cycle exhibits the Law as "holy and just and good," yet unable to bring in an epoch of righteousness. The "Latter" cycle then comes forward, "as a light shining in a dark" and dreary "region[1]," and points to a time, when the Law shall be transfigured and glorified, and its interior purpose be realized before all nations.

It is desirable, then, to bear in mind, and to profit by, the arrangement which exists in the Hebrew. At the same time, it is obvious that, when the books of the New Testament were added to the canon, the natural position of the prophetical books would be at the end of the Old Testament volume; as if looking towards the histories of that great work, which (in outline) they had foretold[2].

§ 2. In the Hebrew, as in the English, Isaiah stands first among the prophets[3]: though four, at least[4], of the minor prophets (Jonah, Joel, Amos, and Hosea) preceded him in time.

The fitness of this arrangement will be readily admitted, on several grounds: of which one only need be referred to.

The book of Isaiah ranges over the whole field of prophetic vision. It begins with a reiteration of the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. When that elicits no signs of repentance, it proceeds to record against the people a sentence of reprobation. Then the instrument, by which God's chastisement should be inflicted, is declared. Assyria shall overthrow Samaria and bring Judah into the extremity of peril. But the prophet is instructed to assure the faithful remnant of safety, not only during the Assyrian crisis, but for all future time. He promises the birth of One whose name should be "Immanuel," "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God." This dying world shall be rescued; and "death swallowed up for ever." In Zion would be laid "a sure Foundation," for the Church's faith to build upon. "The Servant of the Lord" should take the burden of human sin upon Him, and bear it away. He should found a New Covenant, under which the glory of the Lord should be revealed to all nations, and "a new heaven and a new earth" should be created, the eternal abode of holiness.

When we look at the breadth and grandeur of the "Vision," we need no further reason for acquiescing in the existing order. Still the chronological order must be remembered, and the earlier books be viewed as standing in an organic relation to this. Indeed it is only by studying the whole body of the prophets that we can get a clear idea of the one ruling purpose which pervades them all.

[1] 2 Pet. i. 19.

[2] Each of the Gospels in its first chapter refers back to the witness of the prophets; Matt. i. 23; Mark i. 2, 3 (combining Isaiah and Malachi); Luke i. 32, 33, 70, 76; John i. 23, 29.

[3] In a Talmudic treatise (the 'Bava Bathra') we have the three greater prophets placed in the order,—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah:—one motive of this arrangement, probably, being to bring the last chapter of 2 Kings into connexion with the book, of which it is the conclusion (Jer. lii).

[4] Obadiah is held by many to have been prior to Isaiah.

That purpose may be traced in the book which is frequently thought of as if it stood quite apart from the rest, the book of Jonah; the earliest, probably, in the collection. A few remarks illustrating the connexion between this and the later prophecies will not be out of place.

(1) Israel's vocation was to be an intermediary agent, through which the grace of God should be diffused over the world. But what if Israel were untrue to its vocation, and refused to do its part in working out the divine plan? The history of Jonah's mission to Nineveh proved that, in that case, God was able, if He so willed, to work by them, even as reluctant agents, for the publishing of His word among the Gentiles.

(2) The ready reception of that word by the people of Nineveh was a pre-intimation of what was hereafter to take place on a larger scale in fulfilment of the ancient prediction: "I will move them to jealousy by them that are no people[1]." The first commencement of the period of Israel's national "casting away" was marked by a great pagan city's turning to God.

(3) The fact that the doom pronounced on Nineveh was suspended upon their repentance, was a suitable prelude to the warnings of coming judgment, which Israel was about to receive. If Nineveh had been spared, how could the covenant people doubt that they too would be spared, if only they repented?

(4) If, on the other hand, they should not repent, would not "the men of Nineveh rise up in the judgment, and condemn them"?

(5) This reformation of the Ninevites, king and people, made them the more suitable for being employed as "the rod of God's anger" in the punishment of Israel, during the following two or three generations.

(6) That in all this there was nothing arbitrary,—that the divine procedure was regulated throughout by the supreme rule of right,—was seen, when, on the one hand, Sennacherib falling back into the old sin of his ancestors, self-deifying pride, was stricken down by judgment; and on the other hand, Hezekiah and his people, having humbled themselves in true penitence, found that mercy was ready to "rejoice against judgment."

So much, then, as regards the view to be taken of the prophetic function.

§ 3. If this view be correct (and it is undoubtedly the only one which is in harmony with Scripture itself), it is plain that no one, who is held in the chains of *naturalistic* speculation, is qualified to expound the writings of the prophets. They, who deny the possibility of man's spirit being elevated, illumined, informed by the Spirit of God, oppose themselves to what is stated or implied in every part of the records of revelation, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse[2]. Such persons are as little fitted to speak on matters of biblical exegesis, as one who denies the law of gravitation is to lecture on astronomy. They have yet to gain the very basis of theological science, a belief in God as the Creator and Upholder of the universe.

It is well to state this at the outset; since not a few, in recent times, have come forward to interpret the prophets, who do not so much as admit the possibility of such a thing as genuine prophecy.

The assumption, on which this error rests, will encounter us again, when we have to speak of its application to Isaiah in particular. We shall then confront it with an appeal to facts. At present we shall be content with shewing, (1) that it is not axiomatic, and (2) that it is incapable of proof.

The assumption runs thus:—It is inconceivable that God should communicate to man any foreknowledge, or prevision, of future events.

(1) The dictum is generally introduced as if it were an axiomatic truth.

This, however, it cannot be; for a large portion of mankind, including not a few who have been eminent for scientific ability, philosophic insight, and practical intelligence, have believed that such communication has actually taken place.

It can have no claim, therefore, to being an axiom.

(2) Nor yet can it be established by reasoning, whether deductive or inductive.

For a *deductive* proof, it would have to

[1] Deut. xxxii. 21.

[2] Gen. i. 2, 27; Rev. xxii. 17.

be shewn, either that God has not the *power* to impart such knowledge, or that it did not enter into His all-wise plan for the government of the world to do so. To assert the first (it could be but *assertion*) would be to limit the Almighty. To assert the second, a man must needs be himself omniscient. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord[1]?"

As to *induction;*—we may say boldly, that an inductive process, legitimately performed on the facts supplied by the Bible, establishes incontestably that men have foretold future events which lay beyond merely human ken; that a succession of such men professed to be sent by God to deliver such predictions; that their utterances were in many cases in direct opposition to the whole tendency of thought and feeling which prevailed in their age; that this exposed them to much outward suffering and sometimes inflicted deep inward anguish; that, as regards the leading points of their testimony,—those which relate to the coming in of a new dispensation,—their words have at any rate found a most remarkable amount of verification in the history of Jesus Christ and the formation of Christendom[2].

The dictum, then, is infinitely beyond the range of deductive proof, and is opposed to the result of genuine induction.

We may add that, when viewed in relation to the whole scheme of redemption, prophetic announcements—far from being inconceivable—are altogether in harmony with our sense of fitness. Nothing appears more probable, than that, if such a fact as the Incarnation were to take place, it should be fore-heralded by divinely instructed prophets. Not only would such preparatory intimations befit the transcendently august character of the event itself; they would also supply to after-ages an evidence, altogether unique and inimitable, in confirmation of the histories in which the interposition itself might be recorded.

It is the reverse of improbable, therefore, that God would raise up persons qualified to foretell the coming of the world's Saviour;—the great work, which the prophets of Israel did actually perform: for "the testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy[3]."

II. *On the Life and Times of Isaiah.*

§ 1. Of his personal, as distinct from his official, life, we know nothing, except that his father's name was Amoz[4]. All else that we know about him seems to have a bearing on his vocation. His very name (*Yesha-yahu*, "The Salvation of the Lord") may be said to anticipate the work which was assigned him. His wife is "the prophetess[5]." His sons' names bear witness to his prophetic announcements. The only work that we know him to have engaged in, beside those which are mentioned in his own book, is spoken of as if it had an official character[6]: "The rest of the Acts of Uzziah, the Former and the Latter, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write."

§ 2. From his own book we learn that the "Vision," which he recorded, was granted him "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah:"—which seems to imply that some portion of it is to be allotted to each of the four reigns. This, combined with the indications of time contained in vi. 1, vii. 1, xiv. 28, xxxvi. 1, leads to the following general distribution of his prophecies:—

(1) In the reign of Uzziah; ch. i—v.
(2) „ „ „ Jotham; vi.
(3) „ „ „ Ahaz; vii—xiv. 27.
(4) In the first half of Hezekiah's reign; xiv. 28—xxxv.
(5) In the second half of Hezekiah's reign; xxxvi—lxvi.

It is the commentator's province to approximate, where it may be done, to

[1] Isai. xl. 13; Rom. xi. 34; 1 Cor. ii. 16.

[2] This part of the argument will be again touched upon in III. § 4.

[3] Rev. xix. 10.

[4] There are two Jewish traditions respecting him; one that his father Amoz was brother of king Amaziah; the other that he himself died a martyr's death, being "sawn asunder" by order of Manasseh. Neither of them is improbable; and the second found acceptance with several early Christian writers (Justin M., Tertullian, Lactantius, St Jerome, and St Augustine): but they cannot claim to rank as history.

[5] ch. viii. 3.

[6] 2 Chro. xxvi. 22. These "Acts" were probably the source from which the valuable information given in 2 Chro. was derived.

more detailed subdivision; but the above outline is what the way-marks set up by the prophet himself point to. It will be shewn hereafter that the internal evidence is entirely in accord with the external on this point.

What the exact limits of Isaiah's prophetic ministry were, we do not know. If the earlier limit be placed in the fourth year before Uzziah's death (762 B.C.), and the other in the last year of Hezekiah (698 B.C.), his ministry extended over 64 years. The lowest estimate possible would make it comprise 49 years; from the last year of Uzziah to the 17th of Hezekiah (759—710).

It may help us to form a better estimate of the burden he had to sustain during this long period, if we consider what Israel's national circumstances were at this epoch.

§ 3. For 400 years after the occupation of Canaan, Israel had no connexion with either of the two world-empires, Egypt and Assyria. With the former power intercourse was renewed by Solomon. It led very soon, in spite of fair outside appearances, to a dangerous violation of the Law[1]; and was rapidly followed by disastrous consequences. Solomon lived to find his bitter enemies Jeroboam and Hadad welcomed at the court of Pharaoh: and the next generation not only saw a king of Egypt capturing Jerusalem and despoiling the Temple and the Palace, but (worse still) witnessed the establishment of Apis-worship over the whole of the northern kingdom.

Facilis descensus. Sixty years after the schism, another and more decided form of apostasy was introduced into Samaria by Ahab's fanatical queen, Sidonian Jezebel; and was afterwards carried to Jerusalem by her no less fanatical daughter, Athaliah.

Where now are the hopes that truth and holiness should go forth from Zion to bless the nations? Does it not seem as if victory were—as of old—on the side of the powers of darkness?

The battle, however, was not yet over. At this terrible crisis the prophetic spirit was roused into unprecedented activity.

[1] 1 K. iv. 26. See Deut. xvii. 16. Cp. Isai. ii. 7, xxxi. 1.

In the northern kingdom, first Elijah (910—896) and then Elisha (896—839) laboured to turn back the tide of sin. A great effect was produced. Baal-worship was put down. Yet of one king after another it is said; "From after the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, he departed not." After the death of Elisha, the history begins to use language of touching pathos about God's long-suffering compassion[2], which warns us of the approaching end; and at last, in the long and prosperous reign of Jeroboam II, under whom written prophecy began[3], the sentence of reprobation is uttered; "Ephraim is joined to idols:—let him alone[4]."

Nearly about the same time, written prophecy made its appearance in Judah also. Early, it would seem, in Uzziah's reign, *Joel* was directed to proclaim that the "Day of the Lord[5]" was drawing near, "great and very terrible." But no abiding effect was produced.

Outwardly the nation had not been so prosperous or well-organized since the days of Solomon. The Philistines had been humbled, and their cities occupied. The port of Elath had been recovered. Jerusalem was strongly fortified. A national guard had been organized; and new military engines invented. Agriculture, too, was greatly improved, and had been extended by means of irrigation into the desert.

It seemed as if art and science had now at length given stability to the throne of David. Uzziah's heart was lifted up with pride, the root of infidelity. Respect was, indeed, paid, and that unstintingly, to the traditional religion, but without any real faith or devotion. At last the secret unbelief broke out into a deed of extreme audacity—of direct contempt for God's ordinances such as had not occurred since the time of Korah. Uzziah went into the Holy Place, and insisted on having a right to burn incense. The punishment was immediate and signal. Leprosy broke out on the king's brow; on that part of the head,

[2] 2 K. xiii. 23, xiv. 26, 27.

[3] Jonah, Amos, and Hosea all prophesied in this reign: 2 K. xiv. 25; Amos i. 1; Hos. i. 1.

[4] Hos. iv. 17.

[5] Joel i. 15.

which in the high-priest was protected by the leaf of gold inscribed, "Holiness to the LORD." The king went forth with the brand of anathema upon him; and "lived in a several house,"—excluded from society,—till the day of his death.

The monarch was stricken: but were the people less criminal? Was it not, *Qualis rex, talis grex?* And if so, must not they too be put away from communion with the Holy One, whom they had rejected?

§ 4. That was the question which had to receive an answer in the last years of Uzziah's reign; during which Isaiah commenced his prophetic work.

He brought to the men of Judah God's final offers of mercy; set before them the certain consequences of continued impenitence; told them of the true intent of the Law and the worthlessness of a gorgeous ritual without the love of God and man; and promised them full and free forgiveness, with an entire restoration of all covenant blessings, if only they would be "willing and obedient."

The offer was not accepted: nay, was scornfully rejected[1]. Then the prophet had a different mission assigned to him. He was bidden to go and pronounce a judicial sentence, dooming the nation to exile and their land to desolation. This measure was one of mercy, as well as of righteous retribution. By means of such severity Holy Love was working out its own gracious design. "By this *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged;* and this is all the fruit *to take away his sin*[2]."

The ban was uttered: yet its actual execution might be delayed by the zeal and piety of the faithful remnant, the "holy seed[3]," which existed inside the corrupt nation. It was a merciful God, not an impersonal Destiny, that they had to deal with. And so, when Hezekiah and his people, supported by the exhortations of Isaiah, turned to God with decision and uprightness, the power of Assyria, which had swept triumphantly over Samaria, was not allowed to touch Jerusalem. In the crisis of danger, when the nation seemed at its last gasp, Isaiah performed for it the office, which Moses had performed of old, that of intercessor[4]: and a deliverance was granted them second in importance only to that original deliverance out of Egypt.

Thus the first cycle of Isaiah's prophecies received its outward seal. At the time when he spoke of "Immanuel," of Him whose Name was "Wonderful," he had interwoven with those loftier utterances a definite prediction that the Assyrian should be broken in pieces in his assault on Judah. That assurance had now been made good, in a way which exceeded all human hope. A solid guarantee was thus provided of the ultimate fulfilment of those other deeply mysterious prophecies concerning a Divine Saviour.

But the fulness of time for that mighty work is not yet. The sentence of banishment will yet take effect. Even good Hezekiah before long falls into the snare of self-confidence; as devout David and wise Solomon had before done. Isaiah is sent to pronounce the dethronement of the Davidic dynasty. Judah's royal family shall be captives in Babylon.

Now again, as ever, prophecy is as "a light in a dismal region." From this point a new and grander cycle of prophetic utterance begins. The chosen people is but as grass: even its goodliest are but as the fading "flower of the grass:" but yet "the Word of our God shall stand for ever[5]."

Isaiah had heard that Word fifty years before from the lips of seraphim; "His glory is the fulness of the whole earth[6]." He now himself proclaims it. Henceforth his personality disappears. He becomes a voice crying in the world's wilderness, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

But this second cycle of prophecy, like the first, is to have its attendant prediction of temporal deliverance bound up with it; that the fulfilment of this in its season may become a new seal of the truth of those vastly larger promises with which it was associated. He, who wrought the deliverance from Sennacherib, would bring back His people

[1] ch. v. 19. [2] xxvii. 9. [3] vi. 13. [4] xxxvii. 4. [5] xl. 3—8. [6] vi. 3.

from Babylon; but not only so, He would vanquish mightier enemies than Assyria or Babylon. He would "visit upon the host of the high ones that are on high[1]." He would bring in an everlasting covenant; everlasting mercy, righteousness, sanctification, light, joy, salvation[2].

Such was the testimony delivered by Isaiah seven centuries before the birth of Christ;—not only for the comfort of the men who lived in those centuries of expectation, but for the perpetual edification of the Church of God.

From first to last Isaiah's character stands before us as one of almost superhuman elevation. When we think of him during those sixty years discharging so many varied offices—prophet, apostle, psalmist, instructor, intercessor, evangelist, apocalyptic seer; expostulating, reproving, expounding, comforting; doing all with deepest self-resignation and unfaltering faith towards God, and with serene dignity towards men; we seem to be contemplating one who, while retaining all purely human sympathies, has had a portion of seraphic nature communicated to him; one who was fitted not only to bear witness to the perfect "Servant of the Lord" in prophecy, but even, in some degree, to foreshadow His character in actual life.

§ 5. *A few words may be added respecting the time at which this great prophet was raised up. The following facts shew that it was a remarkable epoch, whether as regards Israel or the world at large*[3].

(1) The historical event which stands in the centre of the book—the destruction of Sennacherib's army—took place in 710 B.C.

Now, this year is exactly midway between Israel's complete occupation of Canaan (1445 B.C.) and John the Baptist's announcement that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand (A.D. 25).

And again, if we bisect the interval between the first erection of the tabernacle at Sinai (1490 B.C.) and the burning of the temple in A.D. 70 (which was the end of the Levitical dispensation), the middle point will fall in the same year[4].

(2) This same year, 710 B.C., is also the starting-point of a great political movement in the Gentile world. In that year (so far as can be ascertained) the foundation of the Median monarchy was laid in a very singular manner; Deioces being elected king, by the free choice of the Median tribes, on account of his reputation for justice. This striking event occurred eleven years after Salmaneser had placed a portion of his Israelitish captives "*in the cities of the Medes*[5]." One can scarcely help thinking of a possible connexion between these two facts. But, in any case, the rise of this Median kingdom was one of the most influential events in ancient history. To it is in a large measure attributable the overthrow of Nineveh (in 625 B.C.); to it the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus; to it the establishment of that Medo-Persian empire, whose influence on the later history of Asia and Europe is incalculable[6].

III. *The Unity of Authorship.*

§ 1. To most of those who have entered appreciatively into the spirit of Isaiah's writings, the inquiry on which we now enter may seem superfluous. To them the authorship of chapters xl—lxvi is as little doubtful as the authorship of the 'Phædo' was to the Platonist[7]:—"If Isaiah did not write me, there were two Isaiahs."

Since, however, the genuineness of these chapters has in recent times been frequently assailed, and as a full examination of the question will, we believe, lead to a clearer understanding of the book itself, we shall pass the whole evidence under review.

[1] xxiv. 21.

[2] lv. 3, liv. 8, li. 6, 11, lix. 21, lx. 19, 20.

[3] This will hold good, even if any decline to lay stress on the minute chronological correspondences here alleged.

[4] For some further details, see on ch. xxxvii.

[5] 2 K. xvii. 6.

[6] Mr Birks has noticed that the last year of Uzziah, 759 B.C., is a mean between the three principal eras of ancient history; the First Olympiad (776), the building of Rome (754), and the era of Nabonassar (747).

In other words; the sentence of judicial blindness on Israel synchronizes with the commencements of historical life among the Gentiles.

[7] See Dr Farrar's 'Witness of History to Christ,' p. 52.

§ 2. Now it is not pretended that there is anywhere the slightest trace of doubt existing on this subject in ancient times. The chapters are everywhere unhesitatingly quoted or referred to as Isaiah's. For instance:

(1) The Son of Sirach (Ecclus. xlviii. 22—25) in his notice of Isaiah refers pointedly to the Second Part. "He saw by an excellent spirit the last things[1], and he comforted them that mourn in Zion[2]. He shewed what should come to pass for ever, and the secret things or ever they came[3]."

So that about the close of the third century before Christ (B.C. 220—180), these chapters were looked upon as the distinctive portions of Isaiah's prophetic utterances.

(2) In the Septuagint, as in all other ancient versions, the book is one whole.

(3) Of the *Haftarahs*, or Prophetic Lessons read in the synagogues on sabbath-days, festivals, and fasts, no fewer than sixteen are taken from Isaiah[4]. Of these *thirteen* are from Part II.

This Haftarah arrangement is commonly (and, so far as we know, rightly) believed to date from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (170 B.C.).

(4) The Second Part is frequently quoted by writers of the New Testament as Isaiah's; see Matt. iii. 3, iv. 14, xii. 17[5]; Luke iii. 4; John xii. 38, 39; Rom. x. 16, 20.

(5) It was in the copy of Isaiah used in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv. 17); and in the MS. which the Abyssinian Chancellor carried with him from Jerusalem (Acts viii. 30—34).

(6) Josephus[6] mentions it as the received tradition among the Jews, that Cyrus issued his edict for the re-building of the temple (Ezra i. 2) after he had been shewn Isaiah's prophecies respecting himself.

This statement is strongly confirmed by the internal evidence of the edict. It says: "The Lord God of heaven..... *hath charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem which is in Judah.*" If Cyrus here referred to Isai. xliv. 24—28, xlv. 1—13, his language is accounted for. But this is the only way of accounting either for what he there says, or for his undertaking to authorize the rebuilding of the temple at all. For the Persians were systematically opposed to the practice of worshipping in temples; so that very strong inducement would be needed to make Cyrus issue such an edict. Nor (as Hengstenberg has observed[7]) was Cyrus a man to be taken in "by unauthentic vaticinations."

(7) All the Jewish authorities refer constantly to Part II as Isaiah's. Indeed for 2400 years after Isaiah's death there is only a single person[8] known to have so much as hinted at the possibility of doubt on the subject.

§ 3. What then are the reasons that have led any to maintain a position so entirely destitute of historical support?

Undoubtedly the main reason was that *à priori* assumption, which was noticed above[9].

It was said that Isaiah, living in 700 B.C., *could not possibly* have foretold that a prince named Cyrus would 170 years afterwards liberate the captive Jews out of Babylon. Consequently Part II was adjudged not to be his; and was attributed to some unknown prophet, who lived at Babylon towards the end of the Captivity.

It was soon found, however, that the theory could not stop short there. For there were predictions of the fall of Babylon, of the most definite kind, in chapters xiii, xiv, and xxi. These, then, must in consistency be also taken away from Isaiah. But it was observed that chap. xxxiv had many verbal resemblances to chap. xiii, and that chap. xxxv was almost a miniature of the Second Part; consequently these too must be removed: and so on. At last, the

[1] τὰ ἔσχατα. Cp. Isai. xli. 22, xlvi. 10.
[2] Isai. lxi. 2, 3. Cp. xl. 1, li. 3.
[3] Cp. Isai. xlvi. 10.
[4] A list of these with their corresponding Parashahs is given below in App. A.
[5] One Witness, whose words are in the Gospel, is too sacred to be appealed to in a controversy like this.
[6] 'Ant.' XI. 1.
[7] In Kitto's 'B. D.'; art. *Isaiah.*
[8] Aben-Ezra; an acute Jewish scholar, of the 12th century, but strongly tinged with naturalistic views. The language he employs in reference to this point is obscure; almost enigmatical.
[9] See I. § 3.

greater part of the objectors agreed to allow that Isaiah wrote—

chaps. i—xii; xiv. 24 ff.; xv—xx; xxi. 11 ff.; xxii, xxiii; xxviii—xxxiii;

and to assert, that the other portions were written by four or five unknown prophets, most of whom were supposed to have lived in Babylon at the end of the Captivity;—men of eminent genius; worthy of having their productions associated with those of Isaiah; but of whose names, and of whose existence even, no trace whatever had been preserved.

Jewish tradition, with all its singular tenacity, had allowed the memory of the very greatest of their prophets,—even of that one, whom of all others they would be likely to regard with the most grateful love as their special comforter, and with the highest admiration as their best theological instructor,—to fall into utter oblivion; so that he became to them "as though he had never been."

Such a theory plainly requires overwhelming evidence for its support. Yet of positive evidence (as we have seen) there is nothing. What is produced is entirely of a negative kind. It falls principally under these two heads: (1) No prophet can have prevision of the distant future: (2) The language and style of the parts excepted against differ widely from those of Isaiah.

Many subordinate objections have been put forward by different writers; much too arbitrary, however, (and not seldom mutually conflicting[1],) to call for notice here.

We proceed, therefore, to examine in detail the two main objections.

§ 4. As to the first. We have already shewn that it is an ungrounded assumption. We shall now shew that it is inconsistent with facts.

(1) Isaiah did, undoubtedly, in the acknowledged chapters, predict the future desolation of the land[2]. He did this in clear and positive terms, at a time when all was outwardly prosperous; for chaps. iii, v, and vi, were delivered in the flourishing reigns of Uzziah and Jotham.

It is vain, therefore, to object to the Isaian authorship of the Second Part on the ground that Isaiah could not have had so distinct a prevision of the desolation of Judah. So early as 758 B.C. he had been expressly commissioned to announce this doom as decreed by God. After forty years of diligent ministerial labour, during which he seemed to "spend his strength for nought and in vain," since Israel would not "be gathered" (cp. xlix. 4, 5), he was again commissioned to declare that the descendants of king Hezekiah should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. How could Judea now present itself to the prophet's vision otherwise than as a ruined and desolate land?

(2) Isaiah (in the unquestioned chapters) distinctly foretold that Assyria, after sweeping like a flood over Samaria, would bring Judah into the utmost peril of a like catastrophe; but would be hurled back, and be itself overthrown (viii. 7, 8, x. 5—34).

This was foretold in the second or third year of Ahaz; at a time, when Assyria was looked upon not merely as a friendly power, but as a stay and support of Judah against its northern enemy.

It cannot be denied that after about thirty years the crisis thus foretold did arrive; that, when all human prospect of escape was gone, Hezekiah still held

[1] Two instances of this may suffice.

1. One objects to Part II on the ground that "Isaiah could not have foreseen a personal Messiah."

Another (Mr Cheyne) asserts that Isaiah had "preached in distinct terms the doctrine of a personal Messiah;" but thinks "the omission of any reference to the Messianic King" to be "absolutely decisive against" Isaiah's having written Part II.

2. One says, that the writer of Part II "shews a minute acquaintance with the relations of the oriental world."

Another (Mr Cheyne), with good reason, thinks "the infrequency of the [supposed Babylonian] prophet's references to Babylon" a thing that needs to be accounted for. He attributes it to "his being too much absorbed in the fortunes of his own country to make more than a few passing allusions to the hated scenes of his captivity."

[2] See iii. 8, 25, 26, v. 13, 14, 17, 24, vi. 11, 12, vii. 23—25, xvii. 9, xxxii. 13, 14. In iii. 8, v. 13 (and in xxxii. 14 in the original), the past tense is used.

fast by the prophet's assurances[1]; and that the Assyrian king did suffer a calamitous overthrow.

Against this fact the *à priori* assumption is broken in pieces.

(3) Whoever the writer of chaps. xli—xlviii was, he does unquestionably lay claim to the right of speaking in God's name about the distant future. The claim is put prominently forward, is urged repeatedly, is elaborately asserted as a proof of divine prescience, is made the crucial test of Jehovah's being the only true God[2]; seeing that prevision of a remote contingent future event is possible only to Him who both knows, and can control, all the antecedents of such an event. It is on this ground that the Jews themselves and the heathen generally are challenged to confess the vanity of their idol-gods.

If any one denies that the writer does make this claim, he is beyond the reach of argument.

If any one, admitting that the writer puts the claim forward, have the hardihood to deny that he had any real warrant for doing so, the baseness imputed will only recoil on himself. The calumny will not adhere to one who has been honoured for two millennia as one of the noblest witnesses for truth and righteousness the world has ever had.

Let it be further observed, in how vitally important a relation these passages stand to later Jewish history. They supply us with an adequate explanation of the remarkable fact that the Jewish people after the Restoration from Babylon never again fell into idolatry.

During nine centuries of national existence, from the first year at Sinai downward, they had shewn themselves prone to the sin of idol-worship. Almost before the thunders of the Law had ceased echoing in their ears, they rushed into the *vetitum nefas*. After the thirty-nine years in the wilderness, when they were actually entering the Promised Land, they were again seduced into it. And so it was throughout their occupation of Canaan. This sin, perpetually rebuked and chastised, perpetually reappeared; and at the eve of the Babylonish captivity it seemed more deeply ingrained than ever[3]. Yet after the Return, not only has it disappeared, but the people are inflexibly opposed to any semblance of approach to it.

This marvellous change (one of the most singular that history presents) is fully accounted for, if the Jews on being liberated by Cyrus could look back at these chapters, knowing that they had been written by Isaiah 170 years before. They had now witnessed the wonderful verification of a prophecy, which had been clearly and definitely put forward as a test of divine prescience,—repeatedly insisted upon as that which by its fulfilment should prove that Jehovah was the only true God. And more: this prediction supplied (alone, so far as we can see) the motive which induced Cyrus to issue the decree for their liberation[4]. It was, therefore, inseparably bound up with their revived national life. The Jewish people,—Jerusalem,—the Temple, were now by their very existence "Jehovah's witnesses[5]." What, then, had they "any more to do with idols[6]"?

(4) Again, it is undeniable that the great prophecy[7] in lii. 13 f., liii, had (whenever written) a unique realization in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. One who contends against its being called "a Messianic prophecy," and directs us to call it simply an expression of "Theocratic hopes," is compelled to allow that these hopes "have undoubtedly been fulfilled in Christ's institution[8]."

[1] See xxxvi. 4, 5, 7, 15, 18; xxxvii. 3, 4, 10.

[2] See xli. 21—29, xlii. 9, xliii. 9, 10, xliv. 7, 8, 24—28, xlv. 1—13, 20, 21, xlvi. 9—11, xlviii. 3—8, 12—16.

[3] See Jer. xxxii. 26—35, xliv. 1—10; Ezek. viii. 5—16.

[4] See above, § 2.

[5] xliii. 10, 12, xliv. 9.

[6] Incidentally, this supplies also a complete answer to the objection (Knob.) that to foretell the name of the conqueror of Babylon would have been to wander beyond "the religioso-moral sphere" of prophecy.

[7] Mr Cheyne (p. 23) says: "In ch. liii the idea of vicarious atonement is expressed in such vivid language *as to produce all the effect of a new revelation.*"

[8] Knobel (p. 432); "*haben sich*, das Irdische und Poetische abgerechnet, *allerdings in der Stiftung Christi erfüllt.*"

As to its being a prophecy, "*How could it?*" he argues: "the writer lived 500 years before

(5) But indeed, the dictum is at variance with the whole course of the history of Redemption from its commencement.

The Protevangelium (Gen. iii. 15) was only the initial term of a long series of divine revelations, by which the hope of ultimate salvation was kept alive in the minds of men. These are matters of historical fact, too firmly rooted in the world's history to be ignored: and against them the *à priori* assertions of naturalism are powerless[1].

§ 5. We now come to the objections alleged against Part II on the ground of *literary criticism.*

It is said that, on comparing Part II with those portions of Part I which are admitted to be Isaiah's[2], a diversity of style and language is found to exist, which compels us to infer that it was not written by him.

It is not, indeed, denied that there is a considerable resemblance of character between Isaiah's writings and Part II. One of the most thorough-going advocates of disintegration says[3]: "the author certainly writes, as does Isaiah, *with great animation, with fire and energy;* but much more flowingly and smoothly, with more of breadth and diffuseness."

The question, then, practically is, whether the general similarity here granted be counter-balanced by any alleged differences.

To judge fairly on this point, two obvious cautions should be borne in mind:—

(*a*) It must not be assumed that when an author has passed from one stage of his subject to another, he is bound to remain within exactly the same cycle of thoughts and words. A difference of subject or of design will, of course, involve a certain variety in the mode of expression; in the words, the tone, the manner. No one, for instance, thinks of denying the 'Persæ' to Æschylus, because in form and method of treatment it is strongly contrasted with the 'Prometheus' or the 'Suppliants.'

Supposing, then, that Isaiah, after prophesying for fifty years among "a rebellious and gainsaying people," to whom he had to speak chiefly in the way of reproof and to communicate visions of impending judgment, were commissioned in his old age to register a yet further message from God[4], a message which would be of unspeakable value not only to the men of the Captivity, but to the generation that lived after the cessation of prophecy, and indeed to the Church in every age; can it be said to be probable that the style and language of this later portion would not differ in some respects from those of the former? Must all the parts of the great oratorio be in the same key or be mere variations of the same melodies?

(*b*) That the more an author is distinguished by the originality, depth, and strength, which we associate with the word "genius," the less possible is it to conjecture what may be the mode of

Christ."—As if the length of time, by which the prediction is separated from the event, were not the very circumstance that gives eminence to the prophecy.

What if one argued against the scientific view of the solar system thus?—

"1. That matter should exercise such a force as gravitation, is *inconceivable.*

"2. As for the earth being kept in its orbit by the sun's attraction,—*how can it?* It is ninety millions of miles away from the sun."

Science answers;—The mysteriousness of the fact is admitted:—the deeper we go into nature, the more mysterious it becomes;—but the fact itself remains beyond reach of doubt.

[1] It should, perhaps, be added that these assertions are often *covertly* made under the appearance of argument. Thus it has been said: "If *in any other book* you saw the name of Cyrus, you would say at once that the book was not written before the time of Cyrus. Then you must *in consistency* say so here." In other words:—A prophetic book must, *in consistency*, be treated as if it were not prophetic.

[2] By limiting the base of defence to the *admitted* portions of Part I, many of the more striking parallelisms between Parts I and II are, of course, excluded. We shall, however, keep within those limits, except in one or two special cases.

Respecting the assailed portions (ch. xiii, xiv. 1—23, xv, xvi. 1—12, xxi. 1—10, xxiv—xxvii, xxxiv, xxxv), and what criticism has to say of them, see 'Excursus,' in App. B.

[3] Knobel (p. 334): "Der Verf. schreibt zwar, wie Iesaia, *sehr begeistert, feurig und lebhaft,* aber, etc."

Seinecke makes this resemblance the reason why Part II was attributed to Isaiah (p. 36): "Der Grund ist dass kein späterer Prophet sich *so mit dem Geiste des Iesaias genährt hat,* bei keinem findet sich so *die characteristische Ausdrucksweise* reproducirt."

[4] xl. 1, 5, etc.

treatment which he will think fit to apply to a new phase of his subject.

Now that Isaiah (viewed, for the moment, simply from the human side) stands in the very first rank as regards the qualities just mentioned, is confessed on all hands. Ewald speaks of his "rare originality" and "most genuine poetic versatility," and describes him as "*the perfect master of every kind of style*, which the nature of the subject requires[1]."

To limit such a writer's freedom of deviating in a later work from the mode of treatment he had adopted in an earlier (though the two works are of widely different range), is to do what no sound system of human rhetoric would tolerate for an instant.

Thus much premised, we may proceed to look at the kind of *literary evidence*, which is produced. Our specimens will be taken from one, who is reckoned among the ablest, and was certainly one of the most persevering, of the neo-critics[2].

In proof of a diversity of authorship—

(1) He urges that in Part II Jehovah frequently speaks of Himself as "the creator," "former," "redeemer," "saviour," "compassionater," "comforter[3]," of His people; expressions, he says, "that do not occur even once" in the admitted chapters.

This statement is liable to serious objection on bare philological grounds[4]: but the real question is not one of philology at all. The true point for inquiry is;—was the drift of those earlier chapters so similar to that of the later that you would naturally *expect* these words to occur? The answer is easily obtained.

In ch. xxii. 4, the prophet, seeing in vision his people's calamity, cries out; "Look away from me; I will weep bitterly; *press not on to comfort me;* because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people." And in xxvii. 11[5]; "It is a people that hath no understanding; therefore the Maker thereof shall not *have compassion on it* (*yerachamennu*) and *the Former* thereof (*yotsero*) shall shew it no mercy."

This was the prevailing character of the earlier message (especially as regarded Samaria). Matters were then in the main hasting downward (in spite of the promised deliverance from Assyria) towards the final catastrophe. The national constitution would be broken in pieces like an earthenware vessel (xxx. 14[6]). This was the burden of Part I. But He who had created them at first could yet create them anew, and "form" them to be "a people who should shew forth His praise[7]." *That* was the grand topic of Part II.

There is a *contrast of subject* between the two; but there is a manifest *correlation*—even of a verbal kind—between them. The "comfort" and "compassion" of the later part are granted to her who had been "*not comforted*," "*not*

[1] Mr Cheyne ('Isaiah,' pp. xix, 191) describes the writer of Part II as "a man of *original genius*," "one of the greatest of the prophets:"—one, therefore, who had a strong resemblance to Isaiah himself, the resemblance being *of a kind that could not come of imitation*.

[2] Knobel. The *fourth edition* of his Commentary appeared posthumously in 1872.

[3] בֹּרֵא, יֹצֵר, גֹּאֵל, מוֹשִׁיעַ, מְרַחֵם, מְנַחֵם.

[4] For (1) One of the above participles, יֹצֵר, occurs, in a like application, in xxii. 11, xxix. 16 (cp. note 6).

(2) Four of the other five verbs occur in Part I (though not as participles),—בָּרָא, iv. 5: הוֹשִׁיעַ, xxxiii. 22 (xxxvii. 20, 35): רִחַם, xxx. 18 (xiv. 1, xxvii. 11): נִחַם, xii. 1 (all being used of God).

(3) As regards the remaining word, גָּאַל (which is found in xxxv. 9), it had been used of God from the earliest times (Gen. xlviii. 16; Exod. vi. 6, xv. 13; cp. Isai. lxiii. 16); and was used by Micah of the recovery from Babylon, in the chapter whose first three verses are so nearly identical with Isai. ii. 2—4. In xli. 14, xlviii. 17, liv. 5 the title is associated with "the prophetic seal" of Isaiah, "the Holy One of Israel" (see note 9, on p. 13).

[5] One of the excepted chapters; but the internal evidence of *this* verse at any rate justifies our quoting it here.

[6] Compare the following passages;

xxix. 16.

"Surely, it shall be esteemed as the clay of the potter (יֹצֵר).

"Shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not?

"Or shall the thing formed say of him that formed it (יֹצְרוֹ), He had no understanding?"

xlv. 9.

"Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it (יֹצְרוֹ), What makest thou?

"Or thy work, He hath no hands?"

lxiv. 8 (H. 7).

"We are the clay, Thou art the potter (יֹצֵר), and we all are the work of Thy hands."

[7] xliii. 21.

compassionated[1]." The "salvation" and "redemption" are of that which had been given up to "desolation" and "captivity[2]." The "creative" and "formative" energy is put forth in order that the seed which had "died[3]" might be raised in power and glory and incorruption.

What was alleged as an objection, then, really serves to confirm and illustrate the fundamental unity of the book.

(2) Again: he adduces several well-known and simple terms, which he says have in Part II a peculiar sense, "altogether different" from that in which they are used by Isaiah. But these supposed peculiarities of meaning turn out on examination to be mere fictions. Thus:

(*a*) The verb "*cry*" in xl. 2, 6 means (he says) "to preach." Yet there is a remarkable correspondency between xl. 3, "the voice of one that crieth," followed by, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together," and vi. 4[4], "the voice of him that cried," followed by, "the whole earth is full of His glory."

(*b*) The noun "*righteousness*" (he says) means "happiness" in several places, as, *e.g.*, in lxi. 3; "that they may be called, trees of righteousness." This, in itself groundless, assertion is refuted by a comparison of i. 26: "afterward thou shalt be called, city of righteousness[5]."

(*c*) "*Judgment*" (he says) means "the religion of Jehovah," *e.g.* in xlii. 4, "till He have *set judgment in the earth*." Yet in xxxii. 16 we have what is precisely analogous: "then shall *judgment dwell in the wilderness*."

These alleged divergencies are even parallelisms.

(3) He lays especial stress[6] on certain words that are altogether peculiar, or nearly so, to Part II.

On examination, however, it turns out, that of words found only in Isaiah (most of them ἅπαξ λεγόμενα) there are

in the first twelve chapters (i—xii), *seventy-seven*;
in the twelve admitted chapters (xvii, &c.), *eighty-one*;
and in the twenty-seven chapters of Part II only *seventy-nine*:

so that the number of such words in the more tranquil Book of Consolation is proportionately smaller than in the Book of Denunciation and Woe. Still the number is in itself large. Had it not been so, the later chapters would have wanted *one* of the characteristics of most of the earlier prophecies[7].

Nor must we omit to notice that of *the words which occur in no other book of the Bible*, several are found in both Part I and Part II.[8] So that, here again, the things which are urged as objections to the unity of authorship tend to confirm it[9].

1 liv. 11. Cp. Hos. i. 6, 7.
2 iii. 26, v. 6, vi. 11, 12.
3 Cp. xxvi. 19.
4 In vi. 4, קול הקרא. In xl. 3, קול קרא.
5 In lxi. 3, אילי הצדק. In i. 26, עיר הצדק.
6 "Am wichtigsten sind die sprachliche Elemente" (p. 335).

7 Of *most;* for in Part I there is no mechanical uniformity on this point. Thus in chh. xxx—xxxii, as to whose authorship "there is and can be no doubt" (Knob.);—we have fourteen of these words in ch. xxx, eleven in ch. xxxii, but not one in ch. xxxi.

8
יבל in xxx. 25,	and xliv. 4.
נעצוץ in vii. 19,	— lv. 13.
תעלול in iii. 4,	— lxvi. 4.
אַפִּיר in x. 4 (xxiv. 22)	— xlii. 7.
ענג in xiii. 22,	— lviii. 13.

Note also the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα,

צחה, v. 13,	צחצחות, lviii. 11,
חרם, xix. 18,	חריסות, xlix. 19.

9 Our space does not allow us to exhibit the *verbal* correspondences (many of which will be given in the notes).

The following may deserve special notice:—

(1) יאמר יהוה, in i. 11, 18, xxxiii. 10:—xli. 21, lxvi. 9 (cp. xl. 1, 25).
Elsewhere only in Ps. xii. 6 (E.V. 5).

(2) פי יהוה דבר, i. 20:—xl. 5, lviii. 14.
Elsewhere only in Mic. iv. 4; Jer. ix. 11 (E.V. 12).

(3) "The Holy One of Israel," i. 4, v. 19, 24, x. (17), 20, xii. 6, xvii. 7, xxix. 19, (23), xxx. 11, 12, 15, xxxi. 1, xxxvii. 23 (=2 K. xix. 22) (*twelve* times):—xli. 14, 16, 20, xliii. 3, 14, (15), xlv. 11, xlvii. 4, xlviii. 17, xlix. 7, liv. 5, lv. 5, lviii. 13, lx. 9, 14 (*fourteen* times).
Elsewhere only in Ps. lxxi. 22, lxxviii. 41, lxxxix. 18; Jer. l. 29, li. 5.
This is so remarkable that Luzzatto, a modern Jewish Commentator (quoted by Delitzsch on vi. 3), says: "The prophet...stamped both parts of his book with this name of GOD, 'The Holy One of Israel,' *as if with his own seal*."

(4) רם ונשא, in ii. 13, vi. 1:—lvii. 15 (cp.

§ 6. The voice of criticism, then, is distinctly in favour of the unity of the work: and nothing, therefore, remains to derogate from the authority of the external evidence; which on its own ground is absolutely uncontested.

It would be easy to advance from the defensive position we have occupied, and to point out the many (some of them, enormous) improbabilities involved in the hypothesis that Part II was written by some nameless person about the time that Cyrus was approaching Babylon[1].

We shall only dwell upon one of them; and that mainly as introductory to a general survey of the relation in which Part II stands, in regard of its leading ideas, to Part I.

The hypothesis implies, on the one hand, that Isaiah, after sustaining the faith of the godly Jews for half a century, after constantly promising security to the house of David amidst its greatest perils, after foretelling the birth of Immanuel and the laying in Zion of "a sure Foundation," had broken off his work with the announcement of the captivity in Babylon, and said no more. He, whose "bowels had sounded as a harp for Moab" (xvi. 11), had no wailing for Judea. He, who had been as a guardian angel on the walls of Zion, had no cheering or consoling word for his people in their direst need.—It implies, on the other hand, that an unknown Jewish poet in Babylon, hearing that a Persian prince intended to attack Babylon, undertook to assure the Jews in God's name of his success, and told them it was in God's counsel that Cyrus should rebuild the temple at Jerusalem;—that he acted with this profane presumption, although in his opening chapter he has elaborately set forth the impossibility of puny man's climbing up to a knowledge of God's plans:—that this conjecture, as to what Cyrus might possibly do for the Jews, stirred him up to promise that "the glory of the Lord should be revealed," and (although the mass of the Jews around him were ungodly and unrighteous, ch. lix,) to anticipate a time, when Zion should be illumined with divine light, all her children be taught of God, and "righteousness and praise should spring forth before all the nations."

Isaiah, with the fire of seraphic love in his heart, and assured of God's gracious purposes to Israel, must be entirely silent; and a hundred and seventy years afterwards a captive in Babylon shall overcome all the depressing influences around him, and burst forth into precisely those strains which would have come fittingly from the mouth of Isaiah; "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people, saith your God....The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together:" words which were, in fact, but the translation into prophetic language

lii. 13, lvii. 7), occurs nowhere else. (The participle נִשָּׂא occurs eight times in Isaiah, and only four times elsewhere.)

(5) אוֹר, xxiv. 15, xxxi. 9:—xliv. 16, xlvii. 14, l. 11.
Elsewhere only in Ezek. v. 2.

(6) מִי יְשִׁיבֶנָּה, xiv. 27:—xliii. 13. Nowhere else.

(7) "My mountains," xiv. 25:—xlix. 11, lxv. 9. Elsewhere only in Zech. xiv. 5.

(8) שָׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹם, xxvi. 3:—lvii. 19. Elsewhere only in Jer. vi. 14, viii. 11; 1 Chro. xii. 18.

(9) גַּנּוֹת, of gardens used for idolatrous rites, i. 29:—lxv. 3, lxvi. 17.
Not so used elsewhere.
See also, i. 13—lxvi. 3; i. 19—lv. 2; i. 27—lix. 20; xi. 6 f.—lxv. 25; xi. 12—xlix. 22; etc.

[1] Such as these:

(1) That the noblest body of prophecy in the O. T.—the highest, deepest, broadest in scope, the most exquisitely finished in form,—should be written by one whose life had been spent in Babylon; the alien land, where Zion's true sons hung up their harps in silence, unable to "sing the LORD's song" there.

(2) That a poet (as naturalism views him), so circumstanced, should move with such easy dignity in the circle of Palestinian thoughts and customs and images; speaking, like one who was familiar with them, of hill and valley and tableland, "the glory of Lebanon," the flocks of Sharon, the herds of the Vale of Achor, the rolling sea and its islands, the ships of Tarshish gliding homeward like a cloud of doves, &c.

(3) That the captive Jews in Babylon observed the Day of Atonement (ch. lviii); maintained a ritual including sacrifices, burnt-offerings, oblations, and incense (xliii. 23, lxvi. 23; cp. i. 11, 13); oppressed their own countrymen (lviii. 3—6); had "collections of idols" (lvii. 13); went to mountain-tops for idol-worship (lvii. 7); sacrificed children by the side of torrents (lvii. 5).

(4) That in lxiii. 5, "I wondered that there was none to uphold" refers to Cyrus's being delayed in Asia Minor by the war with Crœsus;—that lxvi. 1, 2 was directed against a design formed by some apostate Jews of building a temple in Babylonia: &c.

of the anthem Isaiah had heard sung by Seraphim; "The whole earth is full of His glory;" as is recorded in the very chapter, that contains the sentence of Judah's excommunication.

We will add, without comment, a few out of very many similar links that bind Parts I and II together.

(1) God abhorred a heartless ritual worship: i. 11, 13:—lxvi. 3.

(2) The Lord of Hosts, the Holy One, sate enthroned in "the High and Holy Place;" vi. 1:—lvii. 15, lxvi. 1.

(3) Yet He regarded the lowly soul, that trembles at His word; vi. 5—7:—lvii. 15, lxvi. 2.

(4) Hereafter He would found a House on His holy mountain, for all nations to resort to: ii. 2, 3:—lvi. 7, lx. 12—14.

(5) Before Him, every high thing,—every mountain and hill,—should be made low: ii. 11, 17, v. 15, 16:—xl. 4.

(6) This in pursuance of an all-wise Plan, which is far beyond the reach of man's thoughts, and stands firm in spite of man's opposition: v. 19, xiv. 24, 27, xix. 12, xxiii. 8, 9, xxviii. 29:—xl. 13, 14, xliv. 26, xlvi. 10, lv. 9, lxiv. 4.

(7) He overrules even human pride and violence to the working out of His righteous chastisements: x. 5, 7, xxxvii. 26:—xlvii. 6, liv. 16.

(8) Israel must be chastised, for they were rebellious children: i. 2, 5, xxxi. 1, 2:—lxiii. 8, 10.

(9) The nation, sick and wounded, could be healed only by God: i. 5, 6, vi. 10:—liii. 4, lvii. 18, 19.

(10) The people and land are forsaken: vi. 12, xvii. 9, xxvii. 10, xxxii. 14:—xlix. 14, liv. 6, 7, lxii. 4, 12.

(11) They are given over to judicial deafness and blindness for a season: vi. 10, xxix. 18, xxxii. 3, xxxv. 5:—xlii. 7, 18.

(12) A remnant should be converted and saved: i. 27, iv. 2, 3, x. 20, 22, xxxvii. 31, 32:—xlviii. 10, lix. 20, lxv. 8, 9.

(13) God Himself would come and save them; xxxv. 4:—xl. 10: God, their King; vi. 5, xxxiii. 22:—xliii. 15, xliv. 6.

(14) One should be born to the house of David, in whom the "sure mercies" promised to David through his Son should be realized, and "an everlasting Covenant" established, vii. 14, ix. 6, 7:—lv. 3, 4.

(15) In xi. 1 it is foretold of this great Scion of David's house that "the Spirit of the Lord should rest upon Him." The fulfilment is described in lxi. 1.

(16) Israel was to be made fruitful by God's Spirit being poured out upon them: xxxii. 15:—xliv. 3, 4.

(17) In v. 2, 7 God planted a Vine to be "His pleasant *plant*," but laid it waste because it brought forth no fruit of "*righteousness*:"—in lx. 21 we read: "Thy people shall be all *righteous*,...the branch of *My planting*;" and in lxi. 3: "that they may be called trees of *righteousness*, the *planting* of the Lord."

(18) In lxiii. 17: "*Why hast Thou*... hardened our hearts from Thy fear?"—a strange challenge, if we had not vi. 10 (cp. xxix. 10) to account for it.

(19) In lx. 1, 18, 20, Zion is addressed thus, "*Arise*, shine, for thy light is come;" "thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and *thy gates Praise*;" "thy *days of mourning* shall be *ended*." Here (as in lvii. 18, lxi. 3, lxvi. 10) we are supposed to know that Zion is seated in gloom, as one that is in mourning during an appointed period for the dead.—Who is not reminded of that vivid picture in iii. 25, 26: "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in battle. And *her gates shall lament and mourn*: and she being desolate *shall sit on the ground*[1]"? (Cp. also xxiv. 4, xxxiii. 9.)

(20) In lxiv. 4, an acknowledgment of God's inconceivably great goodness to "*him that waiteth for Him*" is followed in *v.* 7 by, "*Thou hast hid Thy face from us*."—This striking, yet obscure, combination is explained when we recall the fundamental passage, viii. 17; "And *I will wait for the Lord;* that *hideth His face from the house* of Israel."

(21) In xl. 7, 8 "The flower is faded" occurs twice, with marked elegiac cadence. To what does it refer? The allegorical character of the passage is evident; for "*the people is grass*." What,

[1] Observe, too, how singularly the four-fold תחת of lxi. 3, 7, seems as if meant to reverse the five-fold תחת of iii. 24. (In lxi. 2, 3 אבל occurs three times.)

then, is the flower?—An answer is supplied in xxviii. 1, 3; where Samaria, as it is drawing to its end, is twice spoken of as "the fading flower."

Now the yet nobler flower—an offset, it was hoped, from Paradise,—Zion itself has gone to decay.

Many similar correspondences might be given; latent and unobtrusive, but testifying clearly to the oneness of authorship. We add three more of a somewhat different kind; which will help to illustrate the position in which the Book of Isaiah stands towards the whole of the Old Testament economy.

(22) In xl. 2, there is a very remarkable expression, rendered in A. V., "her iniquity is pardoned;" meaning more nearly, "*her guilt is accepted.*" The only other place, in which the verb and noun are found together, is Lev. xxvi. 41, 43; where God declares how He should deal with Israel if sent into exile for its sins:—"If they then *accept their guilt*" (that is, if they cordially acknowledge it, and submissively receive its due penalty), "then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember." Now the substance of this covenant was: "I will be *their God*, and they shall be *My people*;" so that, virtually, the covenant was re-established, when the first verse of ch. xl burst in with the command "Comfort ye *My people*, saith your God." Therefore the Preface to Part II, ch. xl. 1, 2, tells us distinctly what the grand theme of the following chapters will be;—the renewal of God's covenant relation to those whom He had cast off for their disobedience; the fulfilment of the promise made in Lev. xxvi. 40—45.

But the preceding verses, Lev. xxvi. 14—39, are the basis of Isaiah i—vi[1]; and therefore of Part I generally. It was contempt for those warnings of the Law[2] that brought ruin first on Samaria, and then on Jerusalem.

The two Parts of Isaiah, then, are as solidly united as the above portions of Lev. xxvi are. Part I is "Jerusalem Lost;" Part II "Jerusalem Regained."

[1] See the notes on i. 7, 19, 20, v. 24, 25, and Note A to ch. i.

[2] See v. 24.

(23) In Part I we have the nation described as "*smitten*" by the scourge of God; as full of "*sickness*" inwardly, and outwardly covered with festering "*stripe wounds*" (i. 5, 6). They will not "turn and *be healed*" (vi. 10, ix. 12; cp. xix. 22). Towards its close, however, we have a distant view presented of a restored Zion, in which "none shall say, *I am sick;* the people that dwelleth in it is *forgiven its iniquity*" (xxxiii. 24); from which it appears that the real cause of the nation's malady is unremitted guilt. How, then, has the sinful people been healed?

Part II tells us, how. An exalted Person, "the Servant of the Lord, in whom His Soul delighted" (xlii. 1); One, at whose approach messengers go forth, proclaiming to Zion, "Thy God reigneth" (lii. 7); undertakes the work of atoning for sin[3]. This He does in a way that seems to most men incredible (liii. 1). His appearance was that of one "*smitten of God;*" while in reality "He bore *our sicknesses*...and by His *stripe-wounds we were healed*" (the words being the same as in i. 5, vi. 10[4]). Thus it becomes possible for God to "*heal*" those whom He had "*smitten*" (lvii. 18, 19).

It is evident, then, that the Two Parts not only cohere closely, but have an essential unity. The "Holy One of Israel" is, in Part I, primarily the Kingly Judge, vindicating the claims of His injured Law; in Part II, primarily the Priestly Atoner, offering up Himself to satisfy those claims[5]. The unity of the King and the Priest is even verbally signified; for, as in vi. 1 the King is "sitting upon a throne, high and exalted," so in lii. 13 it is said, "Behold

[3] In xliii. 24 is found the solution of the mystery regarding the "Servant of the LORD." The speaker there is "the LORD, beside whom is no Saviour" (*v.* 11), "the Holy One of Israel" (*v.* 14), Israel's "Creator," "Redeemer," and "King" (*vv.* 14, 15);—and He says, "Thou hast caused Me to serve," *reduced Me to servitude*, "by thy sins." Thus the redemption was effected by One, who "being in the form of GOD," "took upon Him the form of a servant" (Phil. ii. 6, 7).

[4] In i. 5, 6, חבורה, תבן, חלי
liii. 4, 5, חבורה, חלי, מכה (cp. *v.* 10, החלי).
In vi. 10, ורפא לו
liii. 5, נרפא לנו.

[5] See on liii. 11, lxi. 1—3.

My servant... shall be high and exalted[1]."

(24) This will be further illustrated by another word which runs as a golden thread through the tissue of the whole Book,—the word "Peace."

The last word in the priestly benediction was "Peace" (Num. vi. 26); and, in fact, the maintenance of peace between God and His people was the end for which the sanctuary and the priesthood and the whole ceremonial law were ordained. When these ordinances were evacuated of meaning by the persistent rebellion of the people, and at last profanely assailed by Uzziah, "peace" was at an end. In ch. v God withdraws His presence from Solomon's Temple, and declares *War* "against His people" (v. 25). In ch. vi He is in His Heavenly Temple; still, indeed, ready to absolve the lowly penitent (*v.* 7), but issuing an inexorable decree of banishment against the nation hardened in its rebellion. Yet, long before the decree has been executed, a promise is made of the inauguration of a new reign of peace. A Child shall be born, whose Name is a pledge that God is not against us, but "with us;" among whose titles shall be "The Mighty God," the "Prince of *Peace*[2]." To the peace which should spread under His princely rule should be "no end," or limit: for He would "reign in righteousness" (xxxii. 1, ix. 7), and "the fruit of righteousness should be Peace" (xxxii. 17). So the faithful should have assured peace, "*Peace, Peace,*" (xxvi. 3; cp. *v.* 12). Yet of this antitypical Solomon[3], of whose peaceful reign Solomon wrote[4] (Ps. lxxii), it is said: "With the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked[5]."

In Part II we have the like prominence given to the several sides of this representation.

"*No Peace,*" is the denunciation twice most emphatically uttered against "the wicked[6]." Twice it is said of the impenitent, "They know not peace" (lix. 8).

Yet the messenger who is sent to say to Zion, "Thy God reigneth," is to "publish peace" (lii. 7).

Thus far we have parallels to what was seen in Part I. But now there is added, in Part II, an explanation of how this high and deep peace is to be brought about. It is by the suffering "Servant of the Lord;" for in liii. 5 we read, "The chastisement *of our peace*" (by which peace was obtained for us) "was upon Him." And (as before) it is the work of righteousness; "By knowledge of Him, My *righteous* Servant shall make many *righteous;* for He shall bear" (and bear away) "their iniquities" (*v.* 11). So "*the covenant of God's peace*" is established immoveably (liv. 10; cp. 13, 14); for the Righteous One will not cease from making priestly intercession (liii. 12).

Part I, then, requires Part II for its explanation. In order that the King who "reigns in Righteousness" may be "Prince of Peace," the sin of the world must be taken away; as ch. liii shews it to have been.

In the two parts together we have the full picture of Him, who is "the Priest for ever after the style of Melchizedek" (Ps. cx. 4); King of Righteousness, and *also* King of Peace; because through His priestly work the divine "counsel of peace[7]" has been established. He only, "the Priest upon His throne," can build the true temple of the Lord.

The temple built by Solomon was laid in ruins. Babylon overthrew it. A

[1] See above, in (2). Yet Knobel, arguing against the reference of ch. liii to Messiah, asserts: "A Messiah subject to contempt, suffering, and misery never could have inspired hope and confidence." Such a remark may well stand as an illustration of the superhuman origin of the prophet's conception.

[2] The phrase in the Hebrew suggests a rather complex idea: for the word שַׂר is the one used in the title "Captain of the Host" (26 times). (See note on ix. 6.) Cp. "Prince of Life," "Captain of our Salvation," &c.

[3] See on ix. 6, xxxii. 1.

[4] See on xi. 1—3.

[5] רִשְׁעָ, xi. 4.

[6] הָרִשְׁעָ, xlviii. 22, lvii. 21.

[7] Zech. vi. 12.—A singular evidence, that the view we are exhibiting of the book of Isaiah was held by the Jews, in times as old at least as the Masora, appears to be supplied by the Masoretic annotation at the end of the Book. The two texts there quoted for the purposes of 'memoria technica,' are, Zech. xiv. 9; "And the LORD *shall be king* over all the earth;" and Ezek. xx. 41; "And I will accept (אַרְצֶה) you with your sweet savour." At any rate, it would be scarcely possible to select texts better fitted to stand respectively at the head of the Two Parts.

mightier monarch than Solomon is needed for its restoration:—one who can overthrow Babylon, and liberate her captives. Nay: a greater than Cyrus, too, is needed. For it was not really Babylon, which brought destruction on Jerusalem; it was sin. Behind Babylon lay a stronger enemy,—Babylon's archetype,—"Lucifer, son of the morning," who had said, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" (xiv. 12, 13). His empire must be vanquished: the gates of Hades opened: the prisoners of Death delivered[1]. That could be done only by One who was archetype and antitype of Cyrus. That work of conquest and emancipation accomplished, the temple of the Lord begins to be built; and glorified Zion proceeds to spread her radiance over the earth[2].

Our revindication of the later chapters has led incidentally to so many elucidations of the contents and structure of the whole book, that we may (as indeed, we must) be brief in our remaining observations.

IV. *A few hints respecting the Interpretation of Prophecy will suffice.*

§ 1. It lay in the very nature of the Prophet's function, that his utterances should contain many "dark sayings" and enigmas (Num. xii. 8[3]). He was a special minister sent by the Invisible King to uphold the constitution, and further the progress, of His Kingdom on earth. His message had regard to the principles, and administrative measures, of the divine government; yet it had to be delivered in human words. It followed inevitably, that it would often have to be couched in *analogical language;* in figures and symbols, parables and allegories.

This mode of teaching brought with it a probation of the moral and religious character of the hearers. It left the insincere, unbelieving, and formalist to confine themselves within the narrow limits of literalism. It rewarded the patient and docile seeker after God with abundant warning, enlightenment, and comfort. For the help of such inquirers there were provided, in various parts of the message, intimations of its deeper meaning,—φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν;—words which, if not self-luminous, at least reflected light that issued from other passages of Scripture. The interpreter of prophecy must have the faculty of insight to discern these guiding words, and faith (without which there can be no science) to follow out their directions.

§ 2. For the proper construing of those "dark speeches," one indispensable condition is a right understanding of the Pentateuch.

The Law supplied the basis of the prophetic word; and the great mass of legal teaching was conveyed in the form of typical histories and emblematic ordinances. This veiled character of the Mosaic system was set forth by the lawgiver himself in a remarkable way. His practice of covering his face after speaking God's words to the congregation (Exod. xxxiv. 29—35) was not only itself a symbolical act;—and so an *instance* of allegorical instruction;—but the very truth signified by it was, that the legal economy communicated by Moses, as well as his system of teaching generally, was in its nature allegorical. The Law sent forth at intervals bright rays of divine truth,—wondrously elevated words about the character, purposes, and doings of the "Holy One,"—and then it drew over them a curtain of civil statute, or ceremonial enactment, or bare narrative.

The Prophet, whose office it was to sustain the continuity of the Law, and who constantly made his appeal to the Law[4], could not but employ a like allegorical method of speaking[5].

§ 3. Indeed, as time ran on, and the history of the nation gave birth to fresh illustrations of the character of God and new evolutions of His great design, additional materials were provided for pro-

[1] xxiv. 22, xxv. 8, xxvi. 19, lix. 19, 20.

[2] With evidence like the above before us, we cannot think the remark of Sir E. Strachey unjustly severe;—that, when he thought of the attempted disintegration, he was "irresistibly reminded of the tradition that Isaiah was sawn asunder by those who misunderstood and denied his real office and powers." ('Sargon,' &c. p. 324.)

[3] Cp. Ps. xlix. 4, lxxviii. 2.

[4] Cp. Isai. i. 10, viii. 20, li. 7.

[5] See especially the notes on ii, iv, v;—xxv—xxxii; liii, liv, lviii—lxii, &c.

phetic allegory. The apostasy of the Aaronic priesthood first, in the persons of Eli's sons; and afterwards the apostasy of David's royal family, in the persons of Uzziah and Ahaz; called for new expedients of divine wisdom, to guarantee the perpetuity of His covenant against the inroads of the enemy. The first crisis eventuated in the appointment of David as king, by the hands of the prophet Samuel[1], and the bestowal upon him, through the prophet Nathan, of a promise concerning a Son, who should "come forth of his own bowels," yet whose throne should "be established for ever[2]." This Promise and David's thanksgiving Prayer that followed,—in which he seems struggling in vain to make his stammering lips give expression to thoughts of unfathomable depth,—opened up new fountains of mysterious hope for Israel: and, when that hope was obscured by the dark sentence recorded against David's line, the second great crisis was followed by the promise of "Immanuel." In setting forth His kingly and priestly character, the prophet Isaiah ranges over the whole field of earlier Scripture; referring not only to the several books of the Pentateuch, but to the historical books, the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and the writings of earlier prophets[3].

He, who is most conversant with "the thoughts of God" revealed in those earlier Scriptures, has the best key for opening the great Prophecy before us, and will enter with the profoundest appreciation into the allusions which are made to it in the New Testament.

§ 4. The title of the Book is "*The* VISION *of Isaiah;*" which suggests three remarks:

(1) Being a *vision*, it will frequently speak of events, that are yet future, as if they had already occurred. So in iii. 8: "Jerusalem *is ruined;* Judah *is fallen.*" In v. 13: "Therefore my people *are gone into captivity*[4]."

[1] Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 67—71.
[2] 2 S. vii. 12—16.
[3] Cp. notes on ii. 1—4, iii. 16—26, iv. 1—5, v. 1, xi. 1—3, xxii. 1 ff., xxviii. 21, xxxii. 1—5, lv. 1, 2, &c.
[4] This remark is of importance, as shewing the groundlessness of an objection, drawn from i. 7—9, against ch. i being held to be the earliest of Isaiah's prophecies.

(2) What is seen in vision must be subject to the laws of *perspective.* One who views the snowy Alps from a distance may see two mountain peaks, which are really many miles apart, as one object. The illustration is imperfect; yet it may serve to explain how, to the eye of a seer, a nearer event may be blended with one that is *in the same direction, but vastly more remote;* the type, for instance, melting into the antitype, or the interval between the first and second advents of Messiah being indiscernible.

(3) It is, as a whole, *The Vision;*—*one* vision. It consists, indeed, of various parts; yet from the very outset these represent the same *vision.* Judah is rebellious; is sentenced to exile; is redeemed; is purified. These elements, on a large scale, compose the book as a whole; and, on a smaller scale, they compose the first chapter. The body is made up of portions similar in quality to itself and to each other—ὁμοιομερῆ. The visions are greatly diversified in size, form, colouring, and other detail; but in essential character it is one vision.

§ 5. The prophet is one who speaks "of things pertaining to the kingdom of God." It seems to follow from this that, when he speaks of heathen nations, the primary object of his prophecy will still be to instruct God's people respecting the character and ways of their Invisible King. Israel greatly needed the lessons thus conveyed.

(1) They had in old time sinned in "asking a king," in order that they might be "*like all the nations;*" when "the Lord, their God, was their King[5]." That sin had been graciously condoned, and even turned, by God's appointment of David, into an opportunity of rising to a higher religious condition. But again, under Solomon and onward, they fell back and would be "as the nations."

Then they must cease for awhile to be God's people. They shall be "*a nation*[6];" and, like the rest of the nations, shall be tossed about (all that are not in God's ark[7]) in that widely-raging storm of divine indignation which is to visit all "the inhabitants of the earth[8]:" "that they may

[5] 1 S. viii. 5, 7, xii. 12.
[6] גּוֹי, i. 4. Cp. Amos ix. 7—9.
[7] See on xxiv. 18, xxvi. 20.
[8] xxvi. 21.

know God's service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries[1]."

(2) In this way they would learn the true value of those human supports which they had preferred to God's guardian care (see, especially, xx. 6).

(3) Yet it was shewn that the purpose of "blessing all nations" through Abraham's seed should not be frustrated. *That* "word of the Lord" would "stand for ever." The prophet sees in vision, "Israel, a third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth[2];" and this because "the Egyptians [and, therefore, by implication, Israel and Assyria] *had turned unto the Lord, and He was entreated of them and healed them.*" So God's word would work among the nations, as it had done in Israel; saving and blessing the penitent: but if any resolved, like Babel, to "trust in their wickedness," relying on their own "knowledge and wisdom[3]," for such there was but one issue; weariness now, and in the end utter desolation[4].

All this followed directly from the prophecies, when taken of the actual, historical, nations.

(4) But in some cases, at any rate, it seems certain that a people or city is contemplated not from a historical, so much as from the moral and theological, point of view.

Two instances of this stand out so prominently as to call for special notice[5].

(*a*) In xxxiv and lxiii. 1—6, EDOM has been generally understood, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters, in a mystical sense. Most have arrived at their view of that sense from considering that Edom is in many places reproached with its bitter enmity to Israel (cp. Amos i. 11). This, however, is far from being sufficiently specific.

But on turning to the book of Genesis a significancy of a perfectly distinctive kind emerges.

The name *Edom* was given to Esau, when he made light of the heritage of blessing which had been conferred on Isaac and his seed under the solemn guarantee of God's own oath: "I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do me?" In this he stood pointedly contrasted with Jacob, who, purged by long fiery trials from the alloy of earthly policy, won the title, *Israel;* and who could say on his death-bed, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord."

So then, the opposition of Edom to Israel in prophecy is not simply that of *national hostility;* this belonged to Philistia as much as to Edom. The antithesis is that of divergent spiritual character. Edom and Israel, twin-sons of the heir of Blessing, differed as widely as the love of the world and the love of God, as the impatience of unbelief and the patience of faith. If Israel, then, as a nation, despised its divine calling, it became *Edom;* and therefore (since there is no respect of persons with God) must be a "people of God's curse[6]." To stamp this with outward and visible evidence, Israel's land shall be laid desolate;—shall become as the Arabah of Idumea.

Meantime the true Israel, God's faithful and elect servant, "formed for Himself, to shew forth His praise[7]," should "take root" and grow, and "fill the face of the world with fruit[8]."

[1] 2 Chro. xii. 8.
[2] xix. 24.
[3] xlvii. 10.
[4] xlvii. 12—15.
[5] For another remarkable instance, see on xxv. 10. The nations had all alike "gone astray" from God; but "had turned every one his own way" (liii. 6): so that each refracted moral evil in a peculiar way. But, if Israel, with its higher complex spiritual organization, fell away, it was capable of combining many (if not all) of those forms of national evil. *Corruptio optimi fit pessima.* Jerusalem might become as "a cage of unclean birds:" harbouring the sins of Edom and Babylon; of Moab and Philistia; of Tyre and Egypt; of Sodom and Gomorrah (i. 10; cp. Rev. xi. 8).

[6] xxxiv. 5. It is remarkable that before the final ruin of the Jewish people, there was an actual fusion of the descendants of Isaac: for the remnants of Edom were absorbed into the Jewish nation. They conformed to Judaism outwardly; but really made Judæa Edomite. Herod, king of Judæa, represented the dominant secularism of the nation. He was lavish in his gifts to the temple at Jerusalem;—and at Cæsarea he erected a theatre and a hippodrome. He professed a desire to worship the Infant of Bethlehem;—meaning to kill Him. And in all this he did but too truly symbolize the spirit of the nation; which at last crucified the "King of Israel," because it preferred dependence on the Roman Empire to being incorporated into His spiritual kingdom.
[7] xliii. 21.
[8] xxvii. 6.

Thus the use of the term "Edom" in ch. xxxiv prepares the way for the so often repeated "Israel" of Part II. The literal Israel has become desert; but out of the desert God's creative power calls forth a higher order of life and beauty.

(*b*) In xiv. 4—23 we have a lyrical parable[1], sung over the fallen king of Babylon. The language has a mysterious grandeur throughout, but especially in *vv.* 12—15, which almost compels the mind to look out for an allegorical meaning. Nor have we far to seek for this. On looking back we find that "the Burden of Babylon" (xiii. 1) follows immediately upon an ode, which ends thus: "Cry out and shout, O inhabitress of *Zion;* for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

The two terms are antithetic: Zion and Babel. As Zion, the centre of unity in the Davidic kingdom, is used in numberless passages as a type of "the city of the Lord of Hosts[2]," so Babel, built at first to be a centre of unity to a God-defying people, stands as a type of the rebellious Power of Darkness. His false unity should end in utter discomfiture: while Zion, filled with the glory of God, should draw all nations towards it[3].

Only when this typical meaning is apprehended, can justice be done to the actual events of history. The significancy of the Babylonish captivity lay in this:—that the one spot on our earth's surface, which had been illumined with the light of Divine Truth and Holiness, was now once more covered with "the veil spread over all nations[4]." The real bitterness of Zion's desolation consisted in the fact, that the enemy, who had profaned the sanctuary and caused God's people to be banished from His Holy Mountain, was the invisible one who had profaned Paradise and caused those whom God had blessed to be driven out from it to live and die on accursed ground. And a similar remark applies to the restoration from Babylon. The mere return of a few bands of exiles to Canaan could not of itself justify the exuberant joy of the seer; "Sing, O heavens, and exult, O earth[5]." Nine centuries' experience had shewn that the Israel of the Mosaic covenant could "work no deliverance in the earth[6];" nor would the actual temple built by the liberated Jews be aught to glory in[7]. What made the edict of Cyrus so precious was, that it was issued by one who had been raised up by God to overthrow Babylon; and that it could be viewed (under the light of prophecy) as an earnest of incomparably greater things yet in reserve when "the Lord of Hosts Himself" would be "their Redeemer[8]," and would found a Zion that should be an "eternal excellency[9]."

[1] מָשָׁל, xiv. 4.
[2] Ps. xlviii. 8.
[3] ii. 1—4, lx. 3—16.
[4] xxv. 7.
[5] xlix. 13.
[6] xxvi. 18.
[7] Hag. ii. 3.
[8] Observe the occurrence of this article of faith in *v.* 4 of ch. xlvii.
[9] lx. 15. In the notes on Isaiah no attempt will be made to determine the question, how far a literal restoration of Jerusalem is to be looked for. The writer does not see that Scripture supplies materials out of which a definite judgment on this point can be formed. That resuscitated Israel will in some signal way promote the spiritual well-being of the nations, "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts iii. 19; Rom. xi. 12, 15), may be confidently anticipated. That some position of honour may also be granted them, as the "gens prærogativa,"—but of such a kind as will run no risk of encouraging secular pride in them, while it will overthrow the self-exaltation of Christian nations or churches,—seems no improbable conjecture. Beyond this we cannot go.

APPENDIX A.

LIST OF SYNAGOGAL SECOND LESSONS (*HAFTARAHS*) TAKEN FROM ISAIAH, WITH THE CORRESPONDING FIRST LESSONS (*PARASHAHS*).

Haftarah.	*Parashah.*
Isaiah i. 1—28.	Deut. i. 1—iii. 22[1]. (Lesson for *the Sabbath of Temple Desolation.*)
vi. 1—13.	Exod. xviii—xx.
x. 32—xii. 6.	(*For 8th Day of Passover.*)
xl. 1—26.	Deut. iii. 23—vii. 11.
xl. 27—xli. 16.	Gen. xii—xvii.
xlii. 5—21.	Gen. i. 1—vi. 8.
xliii. 21—xliv. 23.	Levit. i—v.
xlix. 14—li. 3.	Deut. vii. 12—xi. 25.
li. 12—lii. 9.	Deut. xvi. 18—xxi. 9.
liv. 1—10.	Gen. vi. 9—xi. 32. And also Deut. xxi. 10—xxv. 19.
liv. 11—lv. 5.	Deut. xi. 26—xvi. 17.
lv. 6—lvi. 8.	Deut. xxxi.
lvii. 14—lviii. 14.	(*For Day of Atonement.*)
lx.	Deut. xxvi. 1—xxix. 8 (E.V. 9).
lxi. 10—lxiii. 9.	Deut. xxix. 9 (E.V. 10)—xxx. 20.
lxvi.	(*For Sabbath-Day: and for New-Moon.*)

[1] Bengel (on Acts xiii) notices that of the three rare words used in Acts xiii. 17—19, *ὕψωσεν, ἐτροποφόρησεν, κατεκληρονόμησεν,* the first is used in Isai. i. 2, the second and third in Deut. i. 31, 38.

APPENDIX B.

ON THE CRITICAL EVIDENCE RESPECTING CH. XIII, XIV. 1—23; XV, XVI; XXI. 1—10; XXIV—XXVII; XXXIV, XXXV.

(1) xiii, xiv. 1—23.

It is admitted that these two go together. Compare, then,

xiii. 2.	"lift up a banner,"	with v. 26, cp. xi. 10.
3.	"to my wrath."	x. 5.
	עלין (occurs *only* seven times; of these five are in Isaiah; and the remaining two Zeph. ii. 15, iii. 11 are plainly taken from Isaiah).	xxii. 2, xxiii. 7, (xxiv. 8,) xxxii. 13 (and cp. v. 14 עֲלֵז, *ἅπ. λεγ.*).
4.	"tumult on mountains."	xvii. 12, 13.
5.	"whole earth."	cp. x. 23.
6.	"Day of the Lord."	ii. 12.
7.	"heart melts."	xix. 1.
11.	"lay low the haughtiness."	ii. 12, 17, v. 15, xxxii. 19.
12.	(smallness of remnant.)	x. 16—19, xvi. 14, xvii. 4, 6, xxi. 17, (xxiv. 6, 13,) xxx. 17.
13.	בעברת יי צבאות.	ix. 18 [E.V. 19] the same. Cp. x. 6.
19.	כמהפכת.	i. 7.
xiv. 5.	"staff...sceptre."	ix. 3, (E.V. 4,) x. 24, 26.
6.	מכה.	x. 20.

Observe, too, the connexion between xiv. 29 and xiv. 5, 6. (It is admitted that xiv. 24—32 must be Isaiah's.)

The phraseology, therefore, strongly resembles that of other parts of Isaiah.

(2) xv, xvi.

Knobel objects to these chapters that the style is too monotonous to be Isaiah's. Delitzsch replies, that Isaiah was master of language in all its forms; that he *meant* here to be elegiac; and that elegy loves the monotony of recurrent phrases.

Del. adds: "You may hear the ring of Isaiah's style throughout; rhetorically, syntactically, philologically...Not only the stamp and outward form, but the spirit and ideas are thoroughly Isaiah's." We endorse this statement unqualifiedly.

(3) xxi. 1—10.

Knobel does not allege a single objection on philological grounds, but simply refers back to his remarks on ch. xiii. There the only fact noticed, which relates to this chapter, is, that xiii. 8 and xxi. 3 resemble each other. On the other hand, with

xxi. 2.	בוגד, שודד.	cp. xxxiii. 1.
2, 7.	"Elam, Madai, chariots, horsemen."	cp. xxii. 6, 7.
5.	אכול שתה.	xxii. 13. אכול ושתו.
10.	"Threshing...from (מאת) the Lord of Hosts."	xxviii. 22, 27, 29.

Each of these correspondences is striking and radical.

Observe also the intrinsic resemblance between the imagery in *vv.* 1—10 (the watchman on his tower), and in *vv.* 11, 12 (which are allowed to be Isaiah's).

Beyond doubt, Delitzsch was justified in asserting, (he does not go into detail,) that "both the thoughts themselves and the manner in which they are expressed are so thoroughly Isaiah's even in the most minute points, that it is impossible to conceive of any prophecy in a form more truly his."

The truth is that it is *not* on critical grounds that the objection was raised: but because of the distinct utterance in *v.* 9; "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon." The undeniable clearness with which Isaiah foretold the fall of Babylon is made an objection to his having written the prophecy. The documentary evidence, which is complete on all sides, must be set aside, to the violation of the first principles of genuine scientific inquiry, out of deference to an arbitrarily assumed *à priori* notion.

(4) xxiv—xxvii.

The philological evidence here is no less plain. But after what we have seen above it is not necessary to go into much detail. A few instances will suffice:

xxiv. 13.	נקף,	... ...	cp. xvii. 6.
20.	מלונה,	*occurs elsewhere only in*	i. 8.
xxv. 4 f.	...	... ...	cp. iv. 6.
5.	ציון,	*occurs elsewhere only in*	xxxii. 2.
7.	מסכה,	„ „ „ „	xxviii. 20.
xxiv. 6.	מזער,	*occurs elsewhere only in*	x. 25, xvi. 14, xxix. 17.
xxvii. 2.	...	... ...	cp. v. 7.

Delitzsch observes: "The whole cycle is thoroughly Isaiah's, in its deepest foundation and in a hundred points of detail."

(5) xxxiv, xxxv.

It is evident (and admitted) that the two chapters are firmly bound together. One single expression is sufficient proof of this: נָוֶה תַּנִּים, xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 7.

We need only consider chap. xxxv, therefore.

With xxxv. 2.	(Lebanon, Sharon, Carmel, restored to beauty) "They shall see the glory of the Lord."	cp. xxxiii. 9 (Lebanon, Sharon, Carmel, withering). xxxiii. 17.
4.	נמהרי לב.	xxxii. 4, לבב נמהרים.
5.	The reversal of	vi. 10. cp. xxxii. 3.
6.	פסח.	xxxiii. 21.
8.	לא יעברנו.	xxxiii. 21, לא יעברנו.

In all cases, then, the verbal evidence, instead of being opposed to, is conclusively confirmatory of, that authorship, which on the ground of external evidence alone is simply unquestionable.

APPENDIX C.

ON OBJECTIONS TO SUPPOSING CHAPTERS I, VI, AND XVII, TO STAND IN THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

(1) Ch. i.

The principal objection against this chapter has already been answered in part by anticipation[1].

It is said that *vv.* 7—9 could not have been written in Uzziah's reign, because the land was not then desolated.

The answer is that the prophet is here standing as the representative of the Law. As such, he had begun by adopting the language of Deut. xxxii. In this vision he sees the absolutely sure consequences that would follow (in virtue of Levit. xxvi[2] and Deut. xxviii, xxix[3]) from the present abounding sin and unbelief; and he paints as he sees[4]. But that the time of final vengeance has not yet arrived, is evident from *v.* 20; "If ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword." The words that follow this denunciation may be thought even to point back to the actual forewarning given by God in Lev. xxvi. 25.

The chapter, containing so full and frank a promise of forgiveness and restoration to favour (*vv.* 18, 19), is manifestly in place where it stands.

The description of the people, as practising idolatry and yet professing to worship the Lord, agrees with the circumstances of Uzziah's reign[5].

Lastly, it will be shewn that the contents of chaps. ii—v agree very exactly with the supposition of their being written in Uzziah's reign; and these chapters look back to chapter i.

(2) Ch. vi.

The chapter is manifestly in place as the sealing up of the sentence against the people who had refused the offers of mercy made in ch. i.

The וְאֹרָאה of *v.* 1 implies that the prophet was about to write in continuation of what had preceded.

(3) Ch. xvii.

The objection arises simply from assuming that Damascus was only once attacked by the Assyrian. The history of Samaria (which here, as in vii, is linked on to that of Damascus) makes the reverse supposition probable.

[1] See above, p. 19, and cp. the notes.
[2] See especially Lev. xxvi. 31—35.
[3] Deut. xxviii. 33, 49—51, xxix. 23.
[4] The LXX. renders וְנוֹתָרָה in *v.* 8 by ἐγκαταλειφθήσεται:—the Vulg. "et derelinquetur."
[5] The מִשְׁחִיתִים of *v.* 4 is in harmony with 2 Chro. xxvi. 16, xxvii. 2.

To the Reader.

s.av. signifies "The same Hebrew word is used, in the passage or passages just quoted, as in the text."

s.w.a. signifies "The Hebrew word in the text is the same as is used in the following passage or passages."

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER I.

1 *Isaiah complaineth of Judah for her rebellion.* 5 *He lamenteth her judgments.* 10 *He upbraideth their whole service.* 16 *He exhorteth to repentance, with promises and threatenings.* 21 *Bewailing their wickedness, he denounceth God's judgments.* 25 *He promiseth grace,* 28 *and threateneth destruction to the wicked.*

THE vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

2 [a]Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. [a] Deut. 32. 1.

3 [b]The ox knoweth his owner, and [b] Jer. 8. 7.

CHAP. I: The time of divine forbearance towards Judah is drawing to a close. But before sentence is issued, Mercy will make one more earnest attempt to recal them from their errors. In this chapter a clear statement is made of the relation in which the people stand to God and God to them. He, their gracious Father, has been forsaken and slighted by them. He has chastised them in love, and they still rebel. Why will they thus provoke Holy Love to anger? The last vial of wrath is soon to be poured out; unless, giving up their wretched formalism, they resolve to aim at genuine purity and righteousness. If they will do this, God is ready to absolve them from all past guilt, and to reinstate them in their privileges. If they refuse, His sword will fall on them; consuming His adversaries and rescuing Zion out of their hands, that it may again become the "City of righteousness."

Obs. 1. Throughout the chapter, the prophet's standing-point is the Covenant as set forth in Lev. xxvi and Deut. xxviii—xxxii. (The principal references are collected in Note A.)

Obs. 2. It is important to notice that, immediately after the consecration of Solomon's temple, the issue of disobedience had been most definitely stated (1 K. ix. 9; see on *v.* 4).

1. The title belongs to the Book (see 2 Chro. xxxii. 32); cp. Hos. i. 1; Amos i. 1; Micah i. 1; Jer. i. 1. *The Vision* was essentially one and the same throughout. Indeed, the very first prophecy, in ch. i, traverses the whole field of vision; standing to the book, as a miniature sketch to a large picture filled in with rich variety of detail. (Cp. on *v.* 31.)

concerning Judah and Jerusalem] These occupied the *centre* of the vision, as is evident from ii. 1; where we have "all nations" included in the picture, but streaming towards Zion. The Kingdom of Heaven was to embrace all nations; but the King was to spring "out of Judah" (Gen. xlix. 10), and to send forth His word out of Jerusalem (ch. ii. 3). Other nations will be spoken of by the prophet, but only because of the relation in which they stand to Judah and Jerusalem, the heirs of the Abrahamic blessing.

in the days of] See Introd. II. Cp. Hos. i. 1; Micah i. 1.

2. *Hear, O heavens*] These are the first words of the great lyrical prophecy of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 1). The lawgiver had repeatedly invoked "heaven and earth" to be witnesses of the clearness with which he had set the terms of God's covenant before Israel (Deut. iv. 25, 26, xxx. 18, 19, xxxi. 28, 29). Isaiah now calls on those unchanging witnesses to hear what, after the experience of seven centuries, the Lord has to declare concerning His people's conduct. (Cp. Ps. l. 3, 4; Micah vi. 1, 2.)

Obs. 1. The sum of Deut. xxxii, as of the book of Isaiah, is—the casting off of Israel, the calling of the nations to occupy their place, and Israel's final restoration.

Obs. 2. In Rom. x. 19, 20 St Paul places Deut. xxxii. 21 and Isai. lxv. 1 in parallelism; as again, Deut. xxxii. 43 and Isai. xi. 1, 10 in Rom. xv. 10, 12.

the LORD hath spoken] After long silence, He has made a declaration which the prophet is to recite before heaven and earth.

I have nourished and brought up children] So He condescended to call the Israelites: "Ye are the children of the Lord your God"

the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

† Heb. *of heaviness.*

4 Ah sinful nation, a people †laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are †gone away backward.

† Heb. *alienated, or, separated.*

5 ¶ Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will †revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

† Heb. *increase revolt.*

6 From the sole of the foot even

(Deut. xiv. 1; cp. xxxii. 5, 16, 18, 19). He had reared them from infancy (Hos. xi. 1; Jer. ii. 2, 3); and had "made them great and set them on high" (so the same verbs are rendered in Ezek. xxxi. 4). Vulg. "enutrivi et exaltavi."—Cp. Deut. iv. 6, xxxii. 13, 14.

and they (whom I so exalted) *have rebelled against me*] Hos. vii. 13 (same words). In Jer. ii. 28, 29, Amos iv. 4, the verb is used of apostasy.

This charge was eminently true of Solomon (cp. 1 Chro. xxix. 25). But the immediate reference is probably to the prosperity of the nation under Uzziah. Uzziah's sin was one of most direct and high-handed rebellion. See 2 Chro. xxvi. 16, 18 (where the verb rendered "transgress," *v.* 16, and "trespass," *v.* 18, is the same that is used in Lev. xxvi. 40).

3. If they could not rise to the level of the high calling which God had bestowed on them as His children, at least they might have been expected to recognize Him as their "owner" and "master" (*baalim*), who provided them with food. But, as if utterly void even of such knowledge (*v.* 13) and reflexion (Ps. lxxxii. 5) as the irrational animals possess (cp. Jer. viii. 7), Israel left Him who had given them that goodly land, and worshipped gods of wood and stone as their "masters" (*baalim*, Judg. ii. 11, &c.; Hos. ii. 13, 17, xi. 2; 2 Chro. xxiv. 7).

Israel] "My son, My firstborn" (Exod. iv. 22).

my people] to whom I have bound Myself by an everlasting covenant (Gen. xvii. 7, 8).

4. The facts of the case have been stated as from God, with majestic simplicity. The prophet now comes forward to press home on them their guilt and its inevitable consequences. He does so with a deep sigh; *Ah!*—or, "Alas!" (*v.* 24).

Ah sinful nation] though called to be "a holy nation" (Exod. xix. 6; cp. Deut. xxviii. 9).

a people laden with iniquity] guilt-laden, like the Amorites, whom they had displaced (Gen. xv. 16); sinking under a burden of unforgiven sin; though One was near who was ever ready to take off that burden (Exod. xxxiv. 7).

a seed of evildoers] xxxi. 2. Instead of being "a holy seed" (vi. 13), "the seed of the blessed of the Lord" (lxv. 23; lxi. 9), they had become like Babylon's progeny (xiv. 20).

children that are corrupters] Or, "that corrupt themselves" (Deut. iv. 16, 25: xxxi. 29). It is a strong word; implying that they had violated the order of the moral world or the fundamental provisions of the divine law. It is used of the antediluvians "*corrupting* their way," so as to compel the mercy of God to step in and "corrupt" or destroy them (Gen. vi. 12, 13). It is also the word used, in 2 Chro. xxvi. 16, of Uzziah's act in profaning the sanctuary: and of the people at large "doing corruptly" in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham (2 Chro. xxvii. 2). A. S. Th. *διαφθείροντες*.

they have forsaken the LORD] *v.* 28, lxv. 11: as men forsake what they have come to think to be worthless. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 20, xxix. 25, xxxi. 16; Josh. xxiv. 16, 20; 2 Chro. xii. 1—5, xv. 2, xxi. 10, xxiv. 20, 24. Observe, especially, the explicit declaration in 1 K. ix. 9 (where the words of Deut. xxix. 24—26 are employed, as in Jer. v. 19, etc.).

they have **scorned**, and disdainfully rejected, and so blasphemed (Num. xiv. 11, 23, xvi. 30; Deut. xxxi. 20), *the Holy One of Israel* (see Introd. p. 13); Him, "whose Name is Holy" (lvii. 15) essentially; but who, in marvellous condescension, had deigned to dwell in the midst of Israel to sanctify them (Exod. xxix. 45, 46; Lev. xxi. 8). How deeply they rejected Him, is seen in v. 19, 24, xxx. 11.

they are gone away backward] Or rather, *they are gone backward* **estranged** (lit. "they are estranged backward"). Vulg. "abalienati sunt retrorsum." God had taken them, when they were aliens, to be His children; had drawn them near to Himself (Deut. iv. 7); was leading them on to higher blessings; and they turned backward (Exod. xxxii. 8; Num. xiv. 1, 4) to the world and its "strange gods;" which were alien to man's true nature. See on *v.* 7. (Cp. Ps. lviii. 3; Jer. xix. 4.) A. S. Th. *ἀπηλλοτριώθησαν* (cp. Eph. iv. 18).

5. *Why should ye...*] Rather, **Wherefore will ye be still smitten, that ye revolt yet more?** (See Note B below.) The expostulation is like that of Ezek. xviii. 31, "Why will ye die?" From the beginning of their national history (Exod. xxxii. 7, 8; cp. Deut. xxxi. 29) they had found that the stroke of God's rod had always, in severe mercy, followed sin. (Cp. Lev. xxvi. 16, 18, 21, &c.) That had been an invariable se-

unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

7 Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

[c] Deut. 28. 51, 52. chap. 5. 5.

[†] Heb. *as the overthrow of strangers.*

quence; and therefore they must know that, in choosing the antecedent, they virtually chose the consequences. Why would they thus ignore God's chastening (cp. Ps. x. 13)?—why continue to "revolt" (Deut. xiii. 6; ch. xxxi. 6, lix. 13), and thereby provoke this ever-advancing series of divine punishments, when already the body was one mass of festering stripe-wounds?

Obs. The verb rendered "smitten," as in liii. 4, see Introd. III. § 6 (23), is used in Deut. xxviii. 22, 27, 35, "The Lord shall *smite* thee with a sore botch which cannot be healed, *from the sole of thy foot even to thy crown*" (cp. *v.* 6); and exactly the same language is used in the description of Job's leprosy (Job ii. 7).

It is not improbable, therefore, that the text may contain a reference to the signal punishment which followed upon Uzziah's invasion of the sanctuary (2 K. xv. 5; 2 Chro. xxvi. 20). A like stroke must alight on the *nation*, if it persist in unbelief. Already—

the whole (Ps. cxi. 1) *head is sick*] Sick, as Jehoram was (2 Chro. xxi. 18, *s. w.*) when that incurable disease fell on him for his idolatries (ib. *vv.* 12, 15). The body corporate was now suffering like him, for similar sins.

the whole heart faint] and prostrate with languor (Jer. viii. 18; Lam. i. 22, v. 17; cp. Lam. i. 13).

6. *From the sole...*] See Deut. xxviii. 35 (above, on *v.* 5).

no soundness in it] "No sound part." The expression (which occurs elsewhere only in Ps. xxxviii. 3, 7) is the inverse of a phrase, which in Hebrew closely resembles it, found in 2 S. xiv. 25 (cp. Dan. i. 4).

Obs. This latter phrase is used in Song of Sol. iv. 7, of Israel in her ideal purity: "There is no spot in thee." *Now*, how changed!

wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores] "Sword-wounds, and livid wales, and festering scourge-wounds." The abscesses of the last had *not been* **pressed out**, to get rid of the suppuration; and the gaping sword-wounds had not been *bound up* with bandage; and the coagulated blood in stripe-bruises had not *been mollified with* **oil**.

Priests and prophets and people resorted to measures of worldly policy (Hos. v. 13), which did not touch the cause of the malady. He who had smitten could alone heal (Exod. xv. 26; cp. Jer. viii. 22). He was most willing to heal them (Deut. xxxii. 39; Hos. vi. 1, vii. 1, xiv. 4); but they refused to "return to Him that smote them" (ch. ix. 13).

7. The personification is now laid aside, and more direct language employed; chiefly, however (as before), taken from the Law: see Lev. xxvi. 33; Deut. xxviii. 49—52, xxix. 22, 23.

The last passage is important as shewing the connexion between *vv.* 4, 5 above, and the vision now presented to the prophet. "They shall say, when they see the *sores* (*s. w.*) of that land, and *the sicknesses* which the Lord hath laid upon it:—the whole land thereof brimstone, salt, *burning,...like the overthrow* (*s. w.*) *of Sodom and Gomorrah...*;—even all nations shall say; Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?...Then men shall say: Because *they have forsaken* (*s. w.*) *the covenant of the Lord.*"

Already Joel and Amos had described God's judgments on Israel in similar language:—"*A fire devoureth* before them, and behind them a flame *burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden* (cp. Gen. xiii. 10) before them, and behind them a *desolate* wilderness" (Joel ii. 3). "I have overthrown some of you *as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah*, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of *the burning*" (Amos iv. 11).

The final stroke of judgment had been long deferred, but it would assuredly fall on the impenitent. Though the guilty city is still standing (*v.* 10), yet to the prophet's eye the catastrophe is plainly revealed.

Your country is desolate] Lit. "a desolation" (*s. w. a.* Lev. xxvi. 33; Joel ii. 3; ch. vi. 11, xvii. 9, lxii. 4, lxiv. 10). Never had the land been so well cultivated as under Uzziah (2 Chro. xxvi. 10). But, out of sight, "wickedness was burning as a fire" (ch. ix. 18).

your cities are burned with fire] The lot of that which has on it the stamp of apostasy; as (1) the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 20; Deut. ix. 21: (2) *the city that sanctioned idolatry*, Deut. xiii. 16: (3) the daughter of a priest, guilty of unchastity, Lev. xxi. 9 (cp. *v.* 21, below). See also ix. 5, xxxiii. 12, lxiv. 11.

your land] The soil and its products (Deut. xxviii. 33, 51). Lit. "ground:" cp. vi. 11.

strangers devour it in your presence] while you look on in utter helplessness; "so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes, which thou seest" (Deut. xxviii. 33, 34).

The word "strangers" occurs twice in the verse; as if calling attention to the relation

8 And the daughter of Zion is left
as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge
in a garden of cucumbers, as a be-
[d] Lam. 3. 22. sieged city.
Rom. 9. 29. 9 [d]Except the LORD of hosts had
left unto us a very small remnant, we
should have been as [e]Sodom, *and* we [e] Gen. 19. 24.
should have been like unto Gomorrah.
10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD,
ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the

between their sin (*v.* 4) and its punishment. They had put themselves under the care of "strange gods" (Deut. xxxii. 16; Ps. xliv. 20, lxxxi. 9; ch. xliii. 12); let them find out the value of those "alien" protectors. The law of retribution is similarly pointed to in Jer. v. 19, "Like as ye *have forsaken me*, and served *strange* gods (cp. ii. 25) in your own land; so shall ye serve *strangers* in a land not your own."

The hard, unrelenting, character of the foreign conqueror is vividly set forth in Deut. xxviii. 48, 50, 51. More pitiless still were these alien gods: mocking the hunger and thirst of man's soul; leaving his spiritual nature oppressed with "an intolerable sense of desolation" (Rev. H. Woodward, 'Serm.' on Ps. xliv. 20, 21).

Cp. Prov. v. 10; Joel iii. 17; Hos. vii. 9, viii. 7; ch. xvii. 10, xxv. 2, 5, xxix. 5.

and it is desolate...] This return to words whose sound is still lingering on the ear (termed in rhetoric, *anaphora*) is characteristic of Isaiah (Del.) and occurs alike in both parts. The emphasis it imparts is a summons calling special attention to what is said.

as overthrown by strangers] Lit. "like the overthrow of strangers;" the word for "overthrow" being elsewhere used only in reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (xiii. 19; Deut. xxix. 23, H. 22; Amos iv. 11; Jer. xlix. 18, l. 40. Cp. Gen. xix. 21, 25, 29).

The genitive after "overthrow" (as in xiii. 19; Amos iv. 11) is that of the subject. It is desolated as by an overthrow wrought remorselessly by foreigners.

Those foreigners, however, were instruments of Him, whom Israel had provoked (Ezek. xi. 9);—missiles, by which He performed His "strange work" (xxviii. 21);—as much His missiles, as were the fire and brimstone rained down from heaven (cp. xxv. 4, 5).

Obs. How early, and how fully, Judah was forewarned on this point, is strikingly shewn by 2 Chro. xii. 1—12. We there read (*vv.* 2, 4, 9), that Shishak, king of Egypt, with a vast horde of Egyptians, Lubim, Sukkiyim, and Ethiopians, captured Jerusalem and plundered the temple. Then *v.* 5 assigns the cause of the calamity; "Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah," (it was within five years of Solomon's death,) "and said unto them; Thus saith the Lord, *Ye have forsaken Me*, and *therefore* have I also left (forsaken) you in the hand of Shishak."

That this incident was present to the mind of Isaiah seems probable from *v.* 9; for the words there rendered "a very small remnant" closely resemble Shemaiah's words in 2 Chro. xii. 7 ("some deliverance").

8. Amidst the overthrow, however, as amidst the general apostasy which caused it, one object is seen erect, "the daughter of Zion;" —the faithful church, still loyal to the King whose throne was on Zion (Ps. ii. 6; cp. x. 24, xii. 6). She survived, (the idea of the verb rendered "is left" is positive, not privative; cp. 1 K. xviii. 22; ch. iv. 3;) but without her rightful heritage of external strength and beauty;—most unlike the city which God had founded "on the holy mountains" (Ps. lxxxvii. 1).

as a cottage in a vineyard] Or rather, *as a booth*, or temporary cot; of slight structure (Job xxvii. 18; Jon. iv. 6); reared to shelter the solitary watcher of a vineyard. Already the parable of v. 1—7 begins to be anticipated.

as a lodge] Or, "lodging-place" (cp. on xxiv. 20); a rude hut, standing on piles, in which a man was stationed by night to scare away jackals or other wild animals (see Dr Tristram, 'N. H. B.' p. 442).

as a besieged city] Surrounded by enemies (Jer. iv. 16, 17); isolated; required to exercise constant and painful vigilance.

9. *Except* (Ps. cxxiv. 1) *the LORD of hosts*] Who condescended, though Lord of heaven and earth, to establish a covenant of mercy with David (2 S. vii. 26, 27).

had left unto us a very small remnant] (Joel ii. 32). Or, "caused a small remnant to survive;" enabling it to escape the general corruption, and so to be like seed (LXX. and Rom. ix. 29), to preserve the continuity of the Abrahamic Church.

The prophet, who began with reproving the "sinful nation," now identifies himself with it, saying, "Except He had left US..." Cp. ii. 5, vi. 5, xxxii. 15, liii. 2—6, lix. 9—12, lxiii. 15—19, lxiv. 5—12.

we should have been as Sodom] whose "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness," were reproduced in Jerusalem (Ezek. xvi. 49). Cp. iii. 9; Jer. xxiii. 14; (Rev. xi. 8).

10. *ye rulers of Sodom*] Rather, **judges**. It is the same word as the Arabic, *qadi:* and Gesenius quotes an Arabic proverb; "Worse than a qadi of Sodom." (Cp. Deut. xxxii. 32.)

law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

11 To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of † he goats.

12 When ye come † to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13 Bring no more vain oblations;

† Heb. *great he goats.*

† Heb. *to be seen.*

f Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. chap. 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 22.

They "ground the faces of the poor" (iii. 15), "justified the wicked for reward, and took away the righteousness of the righteous from him" (v. 23); while sitting as interpreters of the word and law of God (cp. Note E).

The appeal made in *vv.* 10—20 seems to imply that they tried to compensate for their unrighteous lives by scrupulous (perhaps, extravagant) performance of ceremonial observances. (Cp. Ps. l. 7—22; Amos v. 21—24; Mic. vi. 6—12; Jer. vi. 18—20.)

11. *To what purpose...unto me?*] Or, "of what worth to me (Gen. xxvii. 46) is your multiplying of sacrifices?" They employed sacrifice, as if it were a benefit to God, and laid Him under an obligation; whereas it was a boon, the greatest possible boon, to themselves; given in mercy to enable them to draw near to God in lowly penitence.

saith the LORD] The Hebrew phrase is not the one commonly so rendered in E.V., but a rare form, almost characteristic of Isaiah, since it occurs in *v.* 18, xxxiii. 10, xli. 21, lxvi. 9, and elsewhere only in Ps. xii. 5 (to which ch. xxxiii. 10 bears a close resemblance). In all these instances it indicates, that what is said is meant to put a decisive termination to a long-pending controversy. "Such being the case, *this is what God will say*, once and for ever, regarding it."

I am full of] Or, "sated with," these abundant, but unsanctified, offerings.

The animals here mentioned—rams, bullocks, lambs, goats—were all of them offered on the New-moon, the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Num. xxviii, xxix); the three former as a burnt-offering, to be "a sweet savour unto the Lord" (Num. xxviii. 13, 24, &c.), the last as a sin-offering (ib. 15, 22, &c.).

But offered as they were, without penitence, without faith, without love, they were worse than an empty pageant;—they were a dangerous delusion.

I delight not in...] Or, "I have no pleasure in..." It is the same word as in Ps. xl. 6 (H. 7); li. 6 (H. 8); Hos. vi. 6.

12. They entirely mistook the purpose of those holy days. What they were commanded to do was "to appear," or, present themselves, "before the Lord" (Exod. xxxiv. 23, 24; Deut. xvi. 16); that they might renew their communion with "the living God" (Ps. xlii. 2). What they actually did was *to* **trample** the sacred courts with crowds of mere animals; the pretended worshippers as little realizing the presence of the Holy One as the brute creatures did.

Obs. 1. The same verb is used in v. 5, where it is said that God's vineyard should be "*trodden down*."

Obs. 2. The prophet's rebuke was repeated by our Lord in act, when He cleansed the temple area (Matt. xxi. 12, 13);—shortly after which He delivered the parable of The Vineyard (ib. 33—41), and foretold that Jerusalem should "*be trodden down* of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi. 24).

13. *Bring no more vain oblations*] Lit. "Ye shall no more bring the 'minchah' (meal-offering) of vanity." The minchah, which generally had incense joined with it (Lev. ii. 1—3), formed part of the burnt-offering on festival-days (Num. xxviii. 12, &c.). It, like the rest, was now a vain *opus operatum*. LXX. *μάταιον*.

incense] unaccompanied by the upward breathings of devotion, far from being a fragrant odour, was "*an abomination*" to God; was an offensive thing that had the odour of death (cp. xiv. 19);—a "dead work," abhorred by the Living God (Heb. ix. 14). Cp. Prov. xv. 8, xxviii. 9; Hag. ii. 14.

Obs. 1. The unbelief here reproved really brought down the temple-service to the level of heathenism; turning it into a mere system of magical rites. How could the All-Holy do otherwise than abhor such degrading worship?

Obs. 2. It also paved the way for Uzziah's profanation of the sanctuary.

Year after year, the cycle of "new moon and sabbath," and festivals, ran its round (cp. xxix. 1); and on sabbath and festival the prescribed "assembly" was held (Lev. xxiii. 2 ff.); but all to no purpose. There was the "calling of assembly," but it was only an idle routine; it was no "holy convocation,"—was not "holy to the LORD." All was heartless, meaningless, and therefore hardening.

This could no longer be tolerated.

I cannot away with] Or, "endure." The construction followed by E. V. is also that of the Greek versions and the Vulgate. The following is a more exact rendering: "New-moon, and sabbath, the calling of assembly!

incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; ‖ Or, *grief.* it is ‖ iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them*.

15 And [g] when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye † make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of [h] † blood.

16 ¶ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; [i] cease to do evil;

17 Learn to do well; seek judg-

[g] Prov. 1. 28. Jer. 14. 12. Micah 3. 4. † Heb. *multiply prayer.* [h] chap. 59. 3. † Heb. *bloods.* [i] 1 Pet. 3. 11.

I cannot —, it is ungodliness; even the solemn meeting." See Note C.

the solemn meeting] So the convocation held on the eighth day ("that great day") of the Feast of Tabernacles is styled, Lev. xxiii. 36, Num. xxix. 35; and in Deut. xvi. 8 the convocation held on the Seventh Day of the Passover has the same title.—The most specially religious of assemblies, which should, if anything could, have lifted up men's souls out of their worldliness, was a mass of unreality and insincerity (cp. Jer. ix. 1, E. V. 2, *s. w.*); was "ungodliness" (*aven*, see Hos. iv. 15) concentrated and intensified. Men came forth from their "solemn meeting" prepared to sin with less scruple (cp. lviii. 4).

14. The **set** *feasts*, or days of "holy assembly," were the weekly Sabbath, the Three Great Festivals, the Feast of Trumpets, and Day of Atonement (Lev. xxiii).

my soul]—since, in man, the "soul" is the seat of the emotions and affections (cp. Jer. xv. 1).

they are a trouble unto me] Lit. "they are a cumbrance upon me." The word occurs only here and in Deut. i. 12.

I am weary to bear them] Or, "wearied in bearing with them;" in "forbearing" to punish. LXX. οὐκέτι ἀνήσω (cp. Rom. iii. 25) τὰς ἁμαρτίας ὑμῶν.

Obs. When His justice could no longer forbear, His mercy was still unwearied. Even under the provocation of Ahaz's infidelity the prophet asks, "*Will ye weary* my God also?" and then proceeds to give the promise of "Immanuel" (vii. 13, 14); who afterwards is described (xlii. 1) as "Mine Elect, in whom *My soul delighteth*." In Him God could say to Israel (xliii. 24, 25), "Thou *hast wearied* Me with thy iniquities. I, I am He that *blotteth out thy transgressions* for Mine own sake."

15. He who had so often forborne, nay, entreated (lxv. 2), must now sternly send "distress and anguish" upon them (Prov. i. 27, 28). Then they would *spread forth* their *hands* (lit. "palms") towards heaven, in agony and alarm (Jer. iv. 31), and would "multiply prayer;" but in vain. Their lament would then be: "Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud; so that prayer *cannot pass through*" (Lam. iii. 44; cp. ch. lix. 1, 2; Jer. xi. 14; Ps. lxxx. 4).

The reason of this is now given. Prayer (as the Hebrew word implies) is that which is interposed between God and man to readjust the disordered relation between them. Such prayer is offered by those who lift up "holy hands" (1 Tim. ii. 8; Ps. xxiv. 4). But their hands were

full of blood] Or, **of blood-guilt.**

(1) Even of literal blood-guiltiness there was no lack, *v.* 21, lix. 3, 7. (See especially 2 Chro. xxiv. 22.)

(2) But the context favours a figurative application. Their hands were full of "bribes" (cp. xxxiii. 15; Ps. xxvi. 9, 10), which purchased the ruin of widows and orphans;—it was "the price of blood." (Cp. Micah iii. 9—11.)

16. *Wash you*] as the priests before ministering had to wash their hands and feet on pain of death (Exod. xxx. 19—21). "Wash your hands in innocency" (Ps. xxvi. 6, lxxiii. 13).

the evil...mine eyes] Alluding to the expression, "It was *evil in the eyes of the Lord*" (Deut. iv. 25; 2 S. xi. 27; 1 K. xi. 6; 2 K. xvii. 17; 2 Chro. xxi. 6, &c.).

To remove their ill-doings from before the All-seeing Eyes (Prov. xv. 3) was in fact altogether to "cease" from it. They *had* been systematically "evildoers" (*v.* 4).

17. *Learn to do well*] Or, "to do good." They had to learn the very elements of the art of "well-doing" (1 Pet. iii. 17), or "doing good" (Zeph. i. 12, where the LXX. has ἀγαθοποιεῖν). Vulg. "benefacere."

seek] Or, "seek out," *judgment*,—the embodiment of justice and equity in act; the vindication of right. (Cp. *v.* 21, v. 7, x. 2, xvi. 5, &c.)

relieve the oppressed] Rather, **redress wrong** (Alexr.). The word for "wrong" (derived from the verb "to ferment") seems to mean, according to Jewish tradition (see Note D), obtaining property by chicane;—wrong got out of right by the working of legal artifice (*e.g.* the taking unfair advantage of a legal prescription caused by delay of judgment) as vinegar is got out of wine by fermentation. So Vitr. (after Bochart), "emen-

ment, ‖relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

21 ¶ How is the faithful city be-

‖ Or, *righten.*

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date quod corruptum est." Many moderns: "correct the oppressor."

Obs. In Luke xii. 1, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy," follows on the denunciations in xi. 39—52; "your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." In Matt. xxiii. 14, the hypocrisy shews itself in *devouring widows' houses.*

judge the fatherless] See that they have justice (*v.* 23; Ps. x. 18, lxxii. 4); that their inheritance be not taken away by fraud, or by the hearing of their cause being constantly adjourned.

plead for the widow] and vindicate her claims (cp. 2 K. viii. 3—6; Luke xviii. 3—5).

The orphan and widow were from the first taken by God under his special tutelage; Exod. xxii. 22—24; Deut. x. 18; Ps. lxviii. 5. (Cp. James i. 27.)

This being done, abundant mercy was ready to meet them :—

18. *Come now*] Or even, "Come, I pray you" (v. 3).

let us reason together] Or, "confer together;" that you may know how just My demands are, and how gracious My overtures (cp. xliii. 26; Micah vi. 2, 3, 8).

What follows implies that such a conference could only issue in their acknowledging themselves deeply guilty (cp. Ps. li. 4).

as scarlet] Or, "scarlet robes" (Prov. xxxi. 21). 'Though the sins be glaring and habitual.' Del. notices that the scarlet and white may symbolize the relation of fire to light, and so of the fiery wrath that falls on sin to the light (Num. vi. 25) of God's covenant grace.

A nearer symbolism is, that red is the colour of blood; and that sin can be purged only by blood-shedding. This is suggested by Num. xix. 2, 6, 9; where it is directed that hyssop and scarlet cloth should be burnt along with a Red Heifer, and the ashes used for the water of purification. This passage is undoubtedly referred to in Ps. li. 7; to which the text seems to look back.

A subordinate point in the imagery is, that scarlet and crimson were the *firmest* of dyes; least capable of being washed out.

Obs. Through the mercies of God in Christ the justified sinner may be *transfigured* in mind, and even his body be made a holy sacrifice to God (Rom. xii. 1, 2);—that body of flesh and blood, which shall hereafter be transfigured (Phil. iii. 19) so as to be like *His* body, whose "raiment was white as the light" (Matt. xvii. 2), "exceeding white, as snow; so as no fuller on earth could white them" (Mark ix. 3).

19. *If ye be willing*] If ye "consent" to the invitation given you. Without the consent of their will, God could not save them; and how often had they deliberately refused that consent! (The same verb is used in xxviii. 12, xxx. 9, 15, xlii. 24; Deut. i. 26; Ps. lxxxi. 11; Prov. i. 25, 30.)

and obedient] Rather, *and* **hearken.** Cp. Lev. xxvi. 21, 27, ch. xlviii. 18 (*s. w.*).

the good of the land] Lit. its "goodness:" its best and kindliest fruit (Gen. xlv. 23). Cp. Lev. xxvi. 4, 5, 9, 10.

The vision of *vv.* 7—9 has not yet taken effect. If they return, it shall not take effect.

20. *But if ye refuse*] Another word which their history had made to be of sad omen: Exod. xvi. 28; 1 S. viii. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 10. Cp. Prov. i. 24.

and rebel] *s. w. a.* lxiii. 10; Num. xx. 24; Deut. xxxi. 27; 1 S. xii. 15.

devoured with the sword] The metaphor was easier in Hebr., as "the mouth of the sword" was a very common phrase.

the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it] long ago, by Moses, in Lev. xxvi. 25, "I will bring in upon you *a sword*, that shall avenge the wrong of my covenant;" and now again (cp. xl. 5, lviii. 14), by Isaiah.

Outwardly the sword might be the Assyrian's or the Chaldean's: really it was God's own sword of justice (xxvii. 1; Deut. xxxii. 41, 42). Cp. on v. 26—30.

21. After the above appeal, there seems to be a pause. As no actual assent is forthcoming, the prophet sinks back into the tone of elegy.

How is the faithful city] The "how" of elegy (cp. Lam. i. 1): not so much an expression of wonder, "How can it have come to pass!" as an admission made by reluctant grief, "How incontrovertibly true is it!"

The *rhythm* of the verse will be better seen in the following version: "How is she become a harlot—the faithful citadel! She that was full of judgment, wherein righteousness did lodge,—and now murderers!"

come an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

23 Thy princes *are* rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they [a] judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.[c]

[a] Jer. 5. 28. Zech. 7. 10.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the

The city (or "citadel," *v.* 26, xxii. 2, xxiv. 10, xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5, &c.) is Zion (*v.* 27); but Zion viewed as a type of the visible church, which had been betrothed to God at Sinai with covenant vows, and had afterwards been honoured with fresh pledges of divine love in the promise given to David (2 S. vii. 24, 25, &c.). This Zion had been stedfast in her outward adherence to the law, had been an asylum to the Levite refugees from the northern kingdom, had respected God's sanctuary (the token of the covenant), and had professed to look for "the assured mercies of David;"—outwardly, at least, she had been "faithful with the All-Holy" (Hos. xi. 12, H. xii. 1). She has now broken her plighted troth. The weakness and vacillation of former ages had ended in an express violation of the sanctuary, an overt act of apostasy. Zion —the heiress of those rich promises—had been seduced by worldly prosperity into a proud rejection of her God (cp. Deut. xxxi. 16; Hos. ii. 5).

Obs. The word rendered "faithful" occurs in Deut. vii. 9: "the *faithful* God, that *keepeth covenant and mercy*, &c." And again, as representing loyal adherence to the covenant, in Ps. lxxviii. 37: "neither were they *stedfast in His covenant*." (Cp. *v.* 26.)

righteousness lodged in it] as in a home. No deeds of darkness could harbour there.

but now murderers] Or, "assassins." The word occurs only in one other place, 2 K. vi. 32. The prophet's eye seems here to look forward to the final issues of Zion's infidelity. Already, indeed, Uzziah's grandfather had been guilty of the blood of Zechariah, the prophet-priest (2 Chro. xxiv. 20—22); and his father had been assassinated by conspirators, who laid their plot in Jerusalem (2 K. xiv. 19). But these were only faint presages of what occurred in the reign of Manasseh, whose sins are twice emphatically mentioned as the cause of Jerusalem's overthrow, in that he "shed innocent blood very much *till he had filled Jerusalem* from one end to another;" "which the Lord would not pardon" (2 K. xxi. 16, xxiv. 4).

Obs. Among the numerous analogies that may be traced in the history of the two overthrows of Jerusalem, by the Chaldeans and by the Romans, this is one. The generation, which rejected the final offers of mercy from the mouth of Him to whom Isaiah bore witness, ("How often would I have gathered thy children...and *ye would not*," Matt. xxiii. 37), that "evil and *adulterous* generation" (xii. 39), sealed their own doom by "rejecting the Holy One" and "desiring a murderer to be granted unto them" (Acts iii. 14). Before long, brigandage and assassination spread over the land; ever most malignant in Jerusalem itself (Josephus, 'J. W.,' II. 14). Eventually the *Sicarii* brought on the fatal siege, and were one main cause of its horrors (id. IV. 3).

22. Religious apostasy led to a deterioration of moral character. Under the operation of that vile amalgam, the precious "silver" had become "dross" and refuse (cp. Jer. vi. 29, 30; Ezek. xxii. 18); and instead of true righteousness, there was only an outward, formal, self-justifying, legalism.

thy wine mixed] Or, "enervated." (Here only.) The good wine of Divine Wisdom (Prov. ix. 5) was diluted with the water of human traditions.

singular instance of the extent, to which this dilution was carried eventually, is supplied by the Talmudic saying: "The Text of Scripture is as water, the Mishna as wine, the Gemara as spiced wine."

Alas for those who were thus "wise in their own eyes" (v. 21); mighty to drink as wine "the cruel venom of asps" (Deut. xxxii. 33).

23. The "princes," forgetting the "obligations" of high rank, were "rebellious," or "lawless" (see the note on xxxi. 1, *s. av.*); resisting parental and other rightful authority. Cp. iii. 5, 14; Hos. ix. 15; Jer. vi. 27, 28.

Obs. It was the "princes of Judah" who drew king Joash on to that great crime: 2 Chro. xxiv. 17.

companions of thieves] Or, "accomplices;" since they winked at injustice (Ps. l. 18).

after rewards] Cp. v. 23, xxxiii. 15; Hos. iv. 18; Micah iii. 11. The word in Hebrew is, like our "douceur," one of the euphemisms by which guilt pays involuntary homage to conscience. Nearly: "peace-offerings." (Here only.)

neither doth...come unto them] It cannot find access to them; for *it* has got no silver keys with which to open the closed doors of the unjust judge. But there is a Judge, who takes cognizance of it:—

24. *the Lord*] An unusual form (*ha-Adon*); which is used in the command, "Thrice

LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

25 ¶ And I will turn my hand upon thee, and †purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

† Heb. according to pureness.

26 And I will restore thy judges as

in the year shall all thy males appear before *the Lord*, Jehovah" (Exod. xxiii. 17); "before *the Lord*, Jehovah, the God of Israel" (Exod. xxxiv. 23). Elsewhere it occurs only in Isai. i. 24, iii. 1, x. 16, 23, xix. 4; and (after a quotation from Isaiah) in Mal. iii. 1.

It designates God as the Supreme Administrator and Judge. They had "appeared before Him" (*v.* 12), much as if they were patronizing one whom they were willing to please with a grand pageant, but who had no real control over them (cp. Ps. xii. 5 *adon*); and after "trampling" His courts had gone forth to oppress their fellow-men. He will now prove Himself to be what He was called.

Obs. In all the passages in Isaiah it is followed by "the Lord of Hosts," and is connected with a sentence of divine retribution. Cp. James v. 4: "Behold, the hire of the labourers...which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and *the cries...have entered into the ears of the* LORD *God of Sabaoth.*" (Cp. Rev. xvi. 7.)

the mighty One of Israel] Mighty to accomplish His purpose regarding Israel, even when they by their sins seem to have frustrated it; mighty to make His spiritual Israel triumph, even though they appear for a while to be overwhelmed beneath the persecution of their carnal-minded brethren.

This is evidently the force of the expression; which occurs here only, but is undoubtedly cast in the mould of "the Mighty One of Jacob" (Gen. xlix. 24, elsewhere only in ch. xlix. 26, lx. 16; Ps. cxxxii. 2, 5).

Joseph, the Nazirite child of Israel, was "sorely grieved" by the archers; but "his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob;" strong to discipline that ungodly, yet self-righteous, family (Gen. xxxiv. 25—31), and bring them through sharp pangs of compunction to repentance and forgiveness; but also (Gen. xlv. 7, lit.) "to establish for" them "a remnant" (*s. w. a.* ch. xxxvii. 4, 32, xlvi. 3) in the earth, and to preserve life to "them for a great escaping" (*s. w. a.* above, *v.* 9, "remnant").

So too with "afflicted" David (Ps. cxxxii. 1). God "cut off all his enemies before him," and promised that "the sons of wickedness should *no more afflict*" His people "as beforetime." (2 S. vii. 9, 10.)

So in ch. xlix. 13, 25 He would rescue "His afflicted" out of the hand of "the terrible." And in lx. 14 He would make "the sons of *them that afflicted*" Zion "come bending down unto" her. And similarly here it follows—

Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries] ridding myself of those who have so long tried my forbearance (*v.* 14). Lit. "I will comfort me from" them. See Ezek. v. 13 (*s. w.*); cp. Deut. xxxii. 36.

"Stern irony of wounded love! As much as to say, This, alas! is the only way they leave Me of getting comfort; by vindicating My holiness in the humiliation of the guilty." (From Schmieder.)

Ah, I will...] Or, "Alas!" (*v.* 4). "He sighs at being compelled to use this severity." (Calv.)

and avenge me of mine enemies] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 35, 41, 42, 43.

It is evident that the "enemies" here are the unfaithful in Israel. By their rebellion against God they made common cause with him—the enemy—who from the beginning had set himself to mar God's work of love on our earth, to exterminate the heirs of promise. The "vengeance," therefore, is for the deliverance of His suffering elect (Luke xviii. 3—8; cp. xxi. 22). He was persecuted in them (Zech. ii. 8; cp. Acts ix. 5); in avenging their cause, He was avenged. Cp. Ps. xii. 5.

Obs. Only along with "a day of vengeance" could "Zion's mourners" obtain comfort (lxi. 2, 3).

25. *I will turn*] Or, **bring back** (*v.* 26, *s. w.*) *my hand upon thee.* That "strong hand," which had been lifted up to redeem Israel out of Egypt (Ps. lxxxix. 13), should again be put forth for a higher work of redemption. (Cp. xi. 11, xxvi. 11.)

The words are addressed to *captive Zion* (cp. *v.* 27), for her encouragement.

Obs. Nehemiah, who in i. 10 pleads for those "whom Thou hast *redeemed*...by *Thy strong hand*," in ii. 8 begins to speak of "the good hand of my God upon me." (Cp. Ps. lxxx. 17; Ezra vii. 6, 9, 28.)

and purely purge away] Lit. "will smelt out as with borax" (or, with alkali); the salt being used as a flux in melting the metal.

all thy tin] Or, "lead;" by which the silver (*v.* 22) had been debased.

Obs. The fire of the Babylonish captivity purged out the old idolatrous alloy. How much more decisive a purification, from worldliness and formalism and self-conceit, may be looked for as the final issue of their later period of affliction!

26. *And I will restore*] Or, "bring back" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 25). Symm. and Th., ἀποκαταστήσω.

as at the first] Deut. i. 16, 17:—or, as at

at the first, and thy counsellers as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be
[h] Or, *they that return of her.* called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

[i] Job 31. 3. Psal. 1. 6. & 5. 6. & 73. 27. & 92. 9. & 104. 35. 27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and [h] her converts with righteousness.

[k] Heb. *breaking.* 28 ¶ And the [k] destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners *shall be* together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

29 For they shall be ashamed of the [c] oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

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the time when the queen of a distant land could say to Solomon; "Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made He thee king, to do judgment and justice." The glorious realization of what that history typified (cp. Ps. lxxii) should be seen "in the latter day" (cp. on ii. 1—4); in "the times of *the restoration* (ἀποκαταστάσεως) of all things, of which God spake by the mouth of all His holy prophets." (Acts iii. 21. Cp. on *v.* 21.)

city of righteousness] The vision of lx. 14 has dawned on the prophet's eye. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 23, xxxiii. 16.

the faithful city] Or, "stedfast citadel" (*v.* 21). The "stedfast," which in *v.* 21 referred to subjective firmness, or loyalty, here may well take in the idea of objective firmness, or stability (as in xxii. 23, 25, lv. 3; 1 S. iii. 20, xxv. 28). Where the first is present, the last will follow. Cp. vii. 9, xxxiii. 5, 6.

27. *redeemed with judgment*] When His just punishment (v. 16, xxviii. 17) had done its work on Zion and brought her sons to penitence, then it would be "*a righteous thing* with God" (2 Thess. i. 6) to "redeem her from the enemy" (Ps. lxxviii. 42, cvi. 10, cvii. 2). His "hand would *lay hold on judgment*" (Deut. xxxii. 41); would rescue her from the terrible one (xlix. 25). Cp. lix. 18—20.

So in Ps. lxxii. 1—14, He who "*redeems* the soul of the needy from deceit and violence" —Himself paying the ransom—is the King, who "judges God's people *with righteousness* and His poor *with judgment*." In and by righteousness He "judges the prince of this world," and delivers those who were in bondage to him.—And the state into which He restores them is one of righteousness. In the redeemed Zion, "judgment and justice" shall be the manifest principles both of His government (ix. 7, xi. 4, 5; Hos. ii. 19; Ps. xcvii. 1, 2), and of His people's conduct.

her converts] Lit. "her returning ones:" that "return to the Lord" (x. 21; cp. Deut. iv. 30, xxx. 2, 8, 10); that "turn away from transgression" (lix. 20).

28. The chapter here reverts to its commencement: the "transgressors" being they who "rebelled" (*s. w.*) in *v.* 2; the "sinners" and "they that forsake the Lord" being as in *v.* 4. Their "destruction," or "breaking down" (xxx. 13, 14, 26, li. 19, lix. 7, lx. 18, *s. w.*), should be

together] and altogether; *en masse*, and utterly (Ps. xxxvii. 38, *s. w.*; cp. ch. lxvi. 17).

shall be consumed] *s. w. a.* in Ps. xxxvii. 20.

29. As the last verse carries us back to Ps. xxxvii. 20, 38, the "oaks" of the present verse might be taken of the wicked man in great power, "spreading himself like a verdant tree on its own soil" (Ps. xxxvii. 35). This would agree with the reference of "oaks of Bashan" in ii. 13; with the "Cursed is the man that trusteth in *men*" of Jer. xvii. 5, 6; and, above all, with Amos ii. 9 (see on *v.* 31). In that case the "gardens" would symbolize luxurious communities.

It is, however, generally referred to idolatry:—the "oak" being "the green tree" under which they set up images (2 K. xvii. 10), and the "gardens" (cp. lxv. 3, lxvi. 17), possibly, like those of Daphne, near Antioch.

In either case,—whether they idolized worldly power and grandeur, or trusted in idols,—they would be left in helpless disappointment (xx. 5, xliv. 9, xlv. 16) in the day of vengeance.

which ye have desired] He was speaking of "the sinners;" he suddenly turns round to the men of his own generation, and says, *You* are the men, who are thus storing up shame and confusion.

that ye have chosen]—the nature of your choice having been most distinctly explained to you: "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil;...I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; *therefore choose life*, that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deut. xxx. 15—19. Cp. Josh. xxiv. 15; Judg. v. 8.)

30. *whose leaf fadeth*] So they confess their state to be, in lxiv. 6. Cp. xxiv. 4, xxviii. 1, 2, xl. 7, 8. They were without vitality; because they had not "chosen life;" for, said Moses, "The Lord thy God,...*He is thy life*" (Deut. xxx. 20). He is the only "Tree of Life." Without Him is no Paradise possible. Cp. Jer. xvii. 4—7.

a garden that hath no water] For they had "forsaken the Fountain of living water;" and the cisterns they had hewed out were "bro-

31 And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench *them*.

[1] Or, *and his work.*

ken" and "could hold no water" (Jer. ii. 13). The contrast is given in lviii. 11.

31. *And the strong shall be as tow*] **The strong man**; glorying in outward greatness. The word occurs elsewhere only in Amos ii. 9; "Yet destroyed I *the Amorite* from before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was STRONG *as the oaks* (cp. on ii. 13); yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath." If Israel fell back into the Amorite's sin of proud self-confidence, he must perish like him. (Cp. Note E.)

and the maker of it] Render (as in *marg.* E.V.), **his work**; all that he in his self-confidence has so laboriously produced (lix. 6); whether his worldly schemes, or his idols.

as a spark] A man's own sin being made to light up the fire of penal retribution (cp. l. 11); the wicked being "snared in the work (*s. w.*) of his own hand" (Ps. ix. 16; cp. xxviii. 4).

none shall quench them] For the fire is maintained by the holy love of Him whose "name is Jealous" (Exod. xxxiv. 14); and His loving jealousy burns with "a most vehement flame," which "many waters cannot quench" (Song of Sol. viii. 6, 7). It will burn to the "nether Hades" (Deut. xxxii. 22); "cruel as Hades" itself (Song of Sol. viii. 6).

Obs. 1. The imagery recalls that of *vv.* 7—9; drawn from the cities that "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

Obs. 2. The end of the first chapter corresponds to that of the whole book (lxvi. 24).

NOTE A.

THE PARALLELISMS BETWEEN CHAP. I AND LEV. XXVI, DEUT. XXVII—XXXII.

With *v.* 2, "Hear, O heavens,"	cp. Deut. xxxii. 1 (xxx. 18, 19, xxxi. 28, 29).
"children,"	,, xxxii. 5, 6, 18, 19 (cp. xiv. 1).
3, "doth not know,"	,, xxxii. 6, 28.
4, "corrupters,"	,, xxxi. 29 (xxxii. 5).
נאץ,	,, xxxi. 20.
"forsaken,"	,, xxix. 25 (24), xxxi. 16.
5, "smitten,"	,, xxviii. 22, 27, 28, 35.
"smitten yet more,"	Lev. xxvi. 18, 21, 27, 28.
סרה,	Deut. xxxi. 29.
6, "from the sole, &c."	,, xxviii. 35.
"wounds, &c."	,, xxviii. 59, 61, xxix. 22, 23 (21, 22).
7, "desolate,"	Lev. xxvi. 33.
"cities burnt,"	Deut. xxix. 22 (cp. xiii. 16).
"strangers, &c."	,, xxviii. 33, 48—52.
כמהפכת,	,, xxix. 22 (E. V. 23).
9, 10, "Sodom...Gomorrah,"	,, xxxii. 32.
16, "evil of your doings,"	,, xxviii. 20.
17, "widow..."	,, xxvii. 19 (cp. x. 18).
19, "be willing and hearken,"	Lev. xxvi. 21, 27.
20, "rebel,"	Deut. xxxi. 27.
"devoured of sword,"	Lev. xxvi. 25, 33 (Deut. xxxii. 25, 41, 42).
21, "harlot,"	Deut. xxxi. 16.
24, "will ease me,"	,, xxxii. 36 (xxviii. 63).
"mine enemies,"	,, xxxii. 41, 42.
"avenge me,"	,, xxxii. 35, 41.
27, במשפט,	,, xxxii. 41.
שביה,	,, xxx. 2, 8, 10 (cp. iv. 30).
29, בחרתם,	,, xxx. 19.

See also on iii. 1, v. 25, 26.

Obs. Micah vi. 13—16 in like manner looks back to Lev. xxvi. 16, 26 and Deut. xxviii. 38—40.

NOTE B. (*v.* 5.)

ON THE RENDERING, "*Why* [=*to what purpose*] *should ye be smitten any more? ye will...*"

(1) It is harsh philologically; since עַל־מֶה ("for what reason?" not "to what end?") naturally refers to the motive of those who are the subject of the verb.

(2) The rhythm of the verse does not allow of so long a pause after "more."

(3) The certainty that God would smite again and again, till the end of correction was attained, was clear from Lev. xxvi. 14—33, and is assumed in ch. v. 25, ix. 12, 17, 21, x. 4 (cp. Amos iv. 9—12).

(4) The purpose of the remonstrance is to *draw them back* from revolt, not to tell them that they would continue in it.

LXX. *τί ἔτι πληγῆτε προστιθέντες ἀνομίαν;*

NOTE C. (*v.* 13.)

In the rendering given above, לֹא אוּכַל is taken absolutely (cp. Jer. xx. 9). Yet it is, in thought, connected both with the "new moon...assembly," that precedes, and with the אָוֶן that follows. It was the long list of punctually observed feasts, that was felt to be insupportable; and the cause of its being so felt was, that they were all void of true godliness. The וְעֲצָרָה comes in at the end as the climax of the interrupted series: "the solemn meeting too!"

The rendering proposed by some, "I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn meeting," requires an epigrammatic emphasis to be laid on the "and," which is quite alien to the Hebrew. It also leaves the clause "new moon..." (not *pendent* merely, which it is; but) entirely disconnected. And lastly; as לֹא אוּכַל is, in that case, used with an ellipsis of a transitive verb (cp. Deut. i. 9), we should expect it to come at the end of the clause, as in Ps. ci. 5.

NOTE D. (*v.* 17.)

The Targum takes the "leaven" of Amos iv. 5 to be, goods unlawfully gotten. Delitzsch notices a Talmudic passage which says, that a man who had taken possession of another's inheritance ever after went by the name of *Ben-Chimtson* (nearly *s. w.*).

In Ps. lxxi. 4 the participle (*chometz*) is joined with מְעוֹל, "the perverter of right" (see on xxvi. 10).

NOTE E. (*v.* 31.)

The narrative of the destruction of the Amorite cities is given in the Parashah (Deut. i. 1—iii. 22), to which Isai. i. 1—28 is Haftarah.

There are several noticeable parallelisms between Deut. i and Isai. i; especially the following:

Deut. i. 12, "How can I myself bear טָרְחֲכֶם...?" cp. i. 13. (The word occurs nowhere else.)

Deut. i. 16, "I charged *your judges*" (to judge righteously, because the judgment was God's). Cp. i. 26.

Deut. i. 26, לֹא אֲבִיתֶם, "Ye would not go up" to take possession of the "good land." Cp. i. 19.

Deut. i. 31, "As a man doth bear his son," cp. i. 2.

Deut. i. 43, (They rebelled against God's command, and were destroyed by the Amorites,) cp. i. 20.

Deut. i. 45, They "wept before the Lord; but the Lord would not hearken," cp. i. 15.

CHAPTER II.

1 Isaiah prophesieth the coming of Christ's kingdom. 6 Wickedness is the cause of God's forsaking. 10 He exhorteth to fear, because of the powerful effects of God's majesty.

THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 And [a] it shall come to pass in the [a] Micah 4. 1, &c.

CHAP. II—VI. Whether ch. vi be, in strictness, included under the "*word of the Lord* which Isaiah...saw" (ii. 1), or not, the above five chapters are intimately united in fact.

In ch. i we heard how the chosen people had slighted their Holy One, profaned His courts, and broken their covenant vows; and how, in consequence, the apostate city was to be consigned to the purifying fire of divine judgment. In chh. ii—vi, while the sin of the people and God's judicial sentence upon them

last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be ‖established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

‖ Or, *prepared.*

3 And many people shall go and

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are set forth with much greater fulness and distinctness; at the same time God is seen "exalted in judgment" (v. 16), "alone exalted" (ii. 11, 17), "high and lifted up" in His heavenly temple (vi. 1, see the note), and "filling the earth also with His glory" (vi. 3); since here on earth He has reared a nobler Zion, every one of whose citizens is holy (iv. 3), a "mountain of the house of the Lord," to which all nations are drawn (ii. 2).

In ch. i the prominent figure is Justice coming to the help of rejected mercy, and pouring out vengeance on the sinful: in chh. ii—vi it is Mercy, by means of justice, triumphing in the restoration of holiness.

The characteristic of ch. i is (as we have seen, ch. i, Note A) its insisting on the stern denunciations of the Sinaitic Law contained in Lev. xxvi, Deut. xxvii—xxxii, while the reference to Ps. lxxii (*v.* 27) is subordinate; the characteristic of ii—vi is, that, though the menaces of the Law are still heard in them (ii. 15, iii. 1, v. 24, 25), it is only after the clearest assurance has been given that the prophecies of 2 S. vii and Ps. lxxii shall be realized. (See Note A below.)

That chh. ii—v belong to the time of Uzziah, is the natural inference from i. 1 and vi. 1. The contents of the chapters are such as thoroughly confirm this obvious view. They refer to a period of prosperity (ii. 6—16) and luxury (iii. 16—23); when there was great attention to military preparations (ii. 7, 15, iii. 2) and commerce (*v.* 16), and great reliance on human power (*v.* 22). Above all; it is only by remembering how, "when Uzziah was strong, his heart was lifted up" (2 Chro. xxvi. 16), and he invaded the Holy Place, that we can fully appreciate the emphatic assertion of God's incomparable exaltation and inviolable sanctity which prevails throughout this section. (See Note B, and cp. intr. to ch. vi.)

CHAP. II. The body of the chapter (*vv.* 7—22) is an expansion of i. 31, "the strong one shall be as tow." The introduction (*vv.* 2—4) gives an assurance that, amidst the wreck of Solomon's kingdom and earthly Zion, the promises made to David shall stand firm.

1. *The word that Isaiah...saw*] (Cp. Amos i. 1; Micah i. 1.) It was *seen;* yet the Vision was spiritual: for what was seen was the "word," revealing to human thought the ultimate designs, as well as the more immediate resolves, of the divine Will.

Obs. 1. The "word" is spoken of, as if it had actual existence: cp. ix. 8.

Obs. 2. The Vision is one which more especially belongs to *Isaiah;* at once Evangelist of Zion, and of the Gentiles.

Obs. 3. In ch. i he had spoken as the republisher of the Law: "Hear the word of the Lord...give ear to the law of our God" (*v.* 10),—the plain, clear, words of the Law (Deut. xxix. 29). Now he is permitted to see, and to unveil, some of the "secret things" (ib.) which God had reserved to Himself. (Cp. the relation of Psalms i and ii.)

The neglect of the Law and the Word had brought "the daughter of Zion" to be as a lonely hut (i. 8). In the Vision Zion is a centre from which "the Law" and "the Word" radiate forth to all nations.

Under the Law the courts of the Lord had been "trodden down" (i. 12): in the Vision the house of the Lord is "exalted above the hills."

The Law had sentenced the land to be "devoured by the sword" (i. 20), the sword of "strangers" (i. 7); in the Vision "nation no longer lifts up sword against nation."

This closeness of relation between chh. i and ii is illustrated by the way in which the Vision commences:—

2. *And it shall come to pass*]—the formula, by which comfortable announcements of blessing are introduced at the beginning of a new section in Deut. xxviii. 1, xxx. 1; Joel ii. 28, H. iii. 1. In Hos. i. 10, H. ii. 1, the antithesis is so strong that E. V. renders it, "YET...shall be."

This is a sufficient answer to the argument which has inclined several of the best interpreters to think the passage a quotation,—whether from an earlier prophet or from Micah (iv. 1—3). The question has so important a bearing on the whole of the first six chapters of Isaiah that it will be fully discussed in Note C.

Obs. 1. The passage, Deut. xxx. 1, is especially important; since the contrast of Deut. xxix and xxx had been presented in i. 4, 7 as compared with i. 27.

Obs. 2. This argument is strengthened by the fact that in Deut. xxxi. 29 (referred to in i. 4, 5) we meet with the expression, which now follows:—

in the last days] Lit. "the *end*, or *sequel*, of days;" *s. w. a.* in xlvi. 10, "Declaring the *end* from the beginning." Of the exercise of that divine prerogative our text supplies an instance.

The expression "last, or, latter days" occurs first in Jacob's dying address (in which men-

say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 And he shall judge among the

tion is made of the coming of the Shiloh and the gathering of the peoples unto Him), Gen. xlix. 1. In Num. xxiv. 14 it precedes the mention of "the star that should come out of Jacob," &c.

In Deut. xxxi. 29 (xxxii. 20) it refers to the mournful issue of Israel's sin; to be followed by their repentance (iv. 30). In Deut. viii. 16, Hos. iii. 5, the word is used of the time of Israel's recovery. (Cp. Acts ii. 17; Heb. i. 2; 1 Pet. i. 20.)

the mountain of the LORD'S house] The mountain which God will establish for His household, the Church;—the antitypical Zion. (Cp. Ps. xv. 1, xxiv. 3.)

"Mountain" is frequently used as the symbol of a kingdom or empire (Ps. lxxvi. 4). In Jer. li. 25 Babylon is a volcano, that desolates the whole earth.

shall be established] The words used in 2 S. vii. 16, 26. The true Heir of David's throne would rear up Zion out of the ruin caused by the lava-torrents of Babylon; and make her to be in deed, what Babylon had vainly striven to become, a centre of unity for the world.

Obs. The builders of Babel tried to erect, with earthy materials, and on a basis of earth, a tower "whose top should be in heaven" (Gen. xi. 3—5). Their effort ended in confusion and dispersion. The contrast is supplied in the vision of Gen. xxviii. 12, where Jacob saw a stair-way let down to the earth, and fixed there, "whose top reached to heaven." And on waking he said, "This is none other but *the House of God.*"

in the top of the mountains] So in Ps. lxxii. 16. Or, "at the head of ...;" Deut. xx. 9. (Cp. Jer. xxxi. 7; Ps. xviii. 43.) In either case, its crest would be the summit of the whole range (cp. xlii. 11). The mountains that now dominated over Zion (Ps. lxviii. 15, 16) would "melt at His presence" (ch. lxiv. 1). Babylon would be an *extinct* volcano (Jer. li. 25). Cp. Ezek. xl. 2; Dan. ii. 35.

and...exalted] Or, **lifted up**, *s.w.a.* in *vv.* 12, 13, 14. See Note C. 3, (*a*).

and all (**the**) *nations shall flow unto it*] Streaming upward; drawn by the mighty attraction (Ps. xliii. 3, 4) of the House of the Lord. Cp. lx. 3—5; Ps. lxxii. 11, 17.

Obs. 1. The verb occurs, outside the present passage and Micah iv. 1, only in Jer. xxxi. 12 and li. 44; which are plainly antithetic. In the first, the nations "flow unto the goodness of the Lord" "on the height of Zion:" in the second, "the nations shall no more flow" downward "unto Bel in Babel,"—into that dark gulf of idolatry and sin.

Obs. 2. The prophecy began to be fulfilled in John xii. 20—32 ("I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me;" following upon, "now shall the prince of this world be cast out").

3. *And many people*] *Many* **peoples**: xvii. 12; Ps. lxxxix. 50.

the mountain of the LORD] xxx. 29. Elsewhere it occurs only in Gen. xxii. 14; Ps. xxiv. 3; (Zech. viii. 3). In Gen. xxii, it is followed by, "In thy seed shall *all the nations* of the earth be blessed." In Ps. xxiv, it follows, "the earth is the Lord's" (cp. Exod. xix. 5). In Zech. viii, it is followed (in *v.* 22) by, "many peoples and strong nations" (combining Isai. ii. 3 and Micah iv. 2) "shall come to seek the Lord" (Ps. xxiv. 6) "in Jerusalem."

Obs. Moses alone was permitted to ascend to "the mount of God," Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 12—17). To "the mount of the Lord," Zion, all nations are to have access.

the house of the God of Jacob] the God, who revealed Himself to Jacob at Beth-El (cp. on *v.* 2); and renewed to him the promise given to Abraham on Moriah; "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxviii. 14).

Obs. The title "God of Jacob" occurs elsewhere (Exod. iii. 6, &c., are not in point) only in Ps. xx. 1, xlvi. 7, 11, lxxv. 9, lxxvi. 6, lxxxiv. 8, xciv. 7. In Pss. xx, xlvi, lxxvi, lxxxiv, mention is made of God's sanctuary, or tabernacle, and of Zion, or the city of God; in xx, xlvi, lxxvi of war-chariots, as useless, or as destroyed by God.

he will teach us] Hebr. *yoreh;* the verb from which *Torah*, the Law (Teaching), comes. (This explains the "for" of the next clause.)

of his ways] The "of" is loosely partitive (Vitr., Drechsl.). It is but "a portion of His ways" (Job xxvi. 14) that men can know here (1 Cor. xiii. 9);—sufficient, however, to enable them to "walk in His paths" (Ps. xxv. 4, 5, 8—10, 12).

out of Zion shall go forth the law] Or rather, "a law" (or teaching). Cp. li. 4 "a law shall go forth (*s.w.*) from Me." It will proceed from Zion; like light (Hos. vi. 5; Isai. li. 4), radiating on all sides. (Cp. xlii. 4; Luke xxiv. 46, 47.)

out of Zion...from Jerusalem] Cp. Joel iii. 16.

4. *And he shall judge*] Shall administer justice as king, xvi. 5.

nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ‖ Or, *scythes.* plowshares, and their spears into ‖ pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

6 ¶ Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished ‖ from the east, and *are* soothsayers like the Phi- ‖ Or, *more than the east.*

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among the nations] Rather, **between** (v. 3; Gen. xxxi. 53). By His providential retributions He will decide those international questions out of which war ordinarily springs (cp. Ps. lxxvi. 8, 9; following closely on the "God of Jacob").

and shall rebuke many people] Or, **reprove** (xi. 3, 4) *many* **peoples.** The reproof is that of an instructor, who is endeavouring to produce *conviction* in the mind of one who is in error:—which is the office of God's Spirit (John xvi. 8—11) and His word (2 Tim. iii. 16). LXX. ἐλέγξει.

and they shall beat...] This shall be in "the latter day;"—after the long period during which "nation would rise against nation" (Matt. xxiv. 7; Hagg. ii. 21, 22);—and after that outbreak of human pride, too, when "all nations" shall gather together for a final and decisive effort to destroy God's kingdom on earth; as is foretold in the passage of Joel (iii. 10), to which Isaiah refers.

neither shall they learn war...] Uzziah was famed far and wide for his invention of new weapons of war (2 Chro. xxvi. 11—15). The elation caused by these achievements seems to have been what led to his mad deed of profaneness. That judgment on the invader of God's sanctuary was a type of the final destruction of the "Wicked one" (xi. 4):—which shall so affect all nations that they shall gladly "*learn* righteousness" (xxvi. 9), submitting themselves to the emancipating yoke of the "Royal Law" of love.

5. This bright vision of the nations flowing to Zion is employed by the prophet to stir up Israel to "jealousy." (Hitzig well compares Rom. xi. 11—14.)

O house of Jacob] (viii. 17, xlviii. 1, &c.). So Israel was called, when it arrived at "the mount of God" (Exod. xix. 3). The "house of Jacob" was there told that, if they would keep God's covenant, then, while "all the earth" was His, they should be a "special treasure to Him above (or, out of) *all peoples*" (ib. *v.* 5). Will they not even now ("alas! sinful nation!" i. 4) turn back to their God and King, and be restored to their high privilege?

Obs. The angel, who foretold the birth of Jesus, "the Son of the Highest," and the heir of "the throne of David" (Luke i. 31, 32, cp. on *v.* 2), said; "He shall reign over *the house of Jacob*, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (ib. *v.* 33).

let us walk in the light of the LORD] That word, which should hereafter go forth from Zion, "a light of the Gentiles" (xlii. 6, xlix. 6, li. 4), was already among them: for "the law was light" (Prov. vi. 23; Ps. cxix. 130). Under it "the light of God's countenance" (Ps. xliv. 3) already rested upon them;—that was the covenant blessing (Num. vi. 25). But this was only a type of a richer blessing; when God would so "make His face to shine upon them...that His saving health should be known among all nations."

Obs. 1. This invitation was renewed (John xii. 37—41) by Him, who was "the True Light which lighteth every man" (John i. 9, xii. 45).—Even she, who had subjected herself to the curse of the law as an adulteress (yes, even the "harlot city," ch. i. 21), might "go, and sin no more," when "the Light of the world" sate in the temple as Teacher (John viii. 2—12).

Obs. 2. As Isaiah's invitation meets with no response, so in the Gospel (John xii. 35—41), "Walk, while ye have the light"—preceded by, "I will draw all men unto Me" (see on *v.* 2),—is followed by, "Jesus did hide Himself from them" (cp. ch. viii. 17), "Yet they believed not on Him," and quotations of Isai. liii. 1 and vi. 9, 10.

6. The "children of the Most High" are resolved to "walk on still in darkness" (Ps. lxxxii. 5, 6); so the prophet turns himself to God (as in *v.* 9).

Therefore] Rather, "For" (LXX, Vulg., Del., Knob.). Or, "It is because," or, "Surely" (Vitringa, "enimvero"). The impassioned call in *v.* 5 implied (what ch. i had stated) that Israel was *not* enjoying "the light of the Lord." This fact, along with the causes of it, is now fully set forth.

"(Well may I thus appeal to the house of Jacob:) For—"

thou hast forsaken thy people...] Not without frequent condoning of sin in the past, Judg. vi. 13 f.; Ps. lxxviii. 60, 65:—nor yet without hope of recovery, 1 S. xii. 22; Ps. xciv. 14 (*s.w.*). Cp. Jer. xii. 7.

they be replenished from the east] In their own estimation they were "rich" and "had need of nothing" (Rev. iii. 17):—being full of the superstitions of that Syrian land (ix. 12, xi. 14), from which Balaam had been brought to curse them (Num. xxiii. 7);—as if what had been so impotent, when employed against them,

listines, and they [1] please themselves in the children of strangers.

7 Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither *is there any* end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither *is there any* end of their chariots:

8 Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:

9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore [2] forgive them not.

10 ¶ Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

11 The [b] lofty looks of man shall be

[1] Or, *abound with the children, &c.*

[2] Heb. *lift not up.*

[b] chap. 5. 15.

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could now be to them a means of national prosperity.

soothsayers] Or, **sorcerers** (lvii. 3). It is nearly the same word as that in Deut. xviii. 10, 14, which is rendered "observer of times." In both these verses it is joined with "soothsayers" (the word used of Balaam).

Obs. Immediately after Deut. xviii. 14 follows, in strong contrast; "The Lord, thy God, will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." (Cp. on viii. 19, lix. 21.)

like the Philistines] whose diviners (1 S. vi. 2) could not heal the wounds inflicted by the Ark of God: yet Ahaziah sent to inquire of the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from his sickness (2 K. i. 2).

and they please themselves in] Or, "strike hands with" (Ges., Del., Kn.); or, "find their sufficiency in" (cp. the noun in Job xx. 22). Anyhow, they wished to forget their divine adoption.

7, 8. In Deut. xvii. 16, 17 the future king was warned against "multiplying to himself silver and gold" and "horses." Solomon disregarded this warning (1 K. iv. 26, x. 21—29); and he fell into idolatry (cp. Hos. xiv. 3). For the beginning of idolatry is, trust in self or in earthly goods (see on *v.* 22 below and cp. Deut. viii. 10—19, xxxi. 20, xxxii. 15, 16). The outward idolatry makes the apostasy more evident, not more heinous.

Obs. 1. David houghed the chariot-horses, which he took in battle from the Syrians (reserving, however, *a hundred*), 2 S. viii. 4.

Obs. 2. Ewald ('H. of I.' III. pp. 204, 5) speaks of Solomon's life as "one of the most intricate knots" of Israelic history; and of his reign as "the highest development of national prosperity possible" under the existing constitution, yet "*the beginning of a canker*, which constantly grows and ends by corroding everything within its reach."

8. *idols*] Properly, "unrealities;" "things of nought" (Jer. xiv. 14; cp. Job xiii. 4); "nonentities," εἴδωλα. See also Ps. xcvi. 5, xcvii. 7; Hab. ii. 18. Cp. ch. x. 10.

which their own fingers have made] (xvii. 8). This is the essence of the argument against idolatry in chh. xli—xlviii. (Cp. Deut. iv. 28, xxvii. 15, xxxi. 29; Hos. xiii. 2, xiv. 3; ch. xxxvii. 19.)

9. *mean man...great man*] and so, all classes of men (Ps. xlix. 2; Prov. viii. 4). But the simpler rendering (cp. *v.* 11) is more forcible: *and* **man is bowed** *down*,—man, made in God's image, is bowed down before what his own fingers have shaped; "insulting both God and human nature" (Cyril Al.);—*and the great man is* **brought low**,—he, whose intelligence and sense of personal dignity (Jer. v. 5) might have saved him from such a degradation. The whole expression recurs in v. 15: and the verbs are used in *vv.* 11, 12, 17 (cp. x. 33, xxv. 12, xxvi. 5, xxix. 4); but with a variation (scarcely, of meaning, so much as) of tone. They, in their self-will, choose to have it so:—then, in stern reality, it shall be so. Better for them to be laid low in misery, than to be the abject slaves of sin.

therefore forgive them not]—bear with them no longer. The verb is the same that was used by Moses in his intercession for Israel, Num. xiv. 19; "as thou *hast forgiven this people* from Egypt even hitherto." Now the very intercessor is compelled to allow the necessity of punishing;—there seems no other way, in which the promise, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (ib. *v.* 21), can be made good. (Cp. on vi. 3.)

Obs. Already the prophet Hosea had been instructed to say (i. 6); "I will not any longer have mercy on the house of Israel, that I should altogether *forgive them*" (using the same expression).

10. So now the divine judgment is seen approaching, with irresistible force.

Enter into the rock] Of old, Israel fled before an invading enemy into caves and rocks (Judg. vi. 2; 1 S. xiii. 6). Now a mightier invader was upon them: from whom there was but one refuge; "Visne fugere a Deo? Fuge ad Deum."

"The Rock" is the name of God in Deut. xxxii. 4. And in Isaiah we have "the Rock of thy strength" (xvii. 10), "the Rock of ages" (xxvi. 4), "the Rock of Israel" (xxx. 29); (cp. xliv. 8). It seems to be in contrast, therefore, with the "rocks" of *vv.* 19, 21.

humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

12 For the day of the LORD of hosts *shall be* upon every *one that is* proud and lofty, and upon every *one that is* lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, *that are* high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,

14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills *that are* lifted up,

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,

16 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all †pleasant pictures.

17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

18 And ‖the idols he shall utterly abolish.

19 And they shall go into the [c]holes of the rocks, and into the caves of †the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for

† Heb. *pictures of desire.*

‖ Or, *the idols shall utterly pass away.*

[c] Hos. 10. 8. Luke 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6.

† Heb. *the dust.*

The same word is used, in Exod. xxxiii. 21, 22, of the rock, in whose cleft Moses was hid, while "the glory of the Lord passed by:"—when after the abundant declaration of divine mercy and placability it was added, "and that will by no means clear (the guilty)" (xxxiv. 7), or "leave unpunished" (Jer. xxx. 11).

This "cleft of the Rock" would appear, therefore, to be a fitting image of the temporary resting-place of the blessed:—a view strongly supported by xxvi. 20, 21.

hide thee in the dust] In humiliation (Job xl. 12, 13, *s.w.*). The view taken of the former clause applies also to this. In Ps. xxii. 15, we have "*the dust* of death:" and in Job xiv. 13; "Oh that Thou wouldest *hide me in the grave*, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, *until Thy wrath be past.*"

for fear of the LORD] Or, "**from before the terror** of the LORD" (*vv.* 19, 21). See 2 Chro. xvii. 10. The LXX. ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ φόβου Κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ:—exactly the same as in 2 Thess. i. 9, except that φόβου is omitted.

11. *The lofty looks*] Lit. "eyes of loftiness;" cp. v. 15. (On the word for "lofty," see Note B.)

the haughtiness of (**great**) *men*] As in *v.* 9.

the LORD alone shall be exalted]—alone shall stand a high and safe asylum (as the word means); like an impregnable rock-fortress (*s.w.a.* in *v.* 17, xxxiii. 5; cp. Ps. xlvi. 7, 11).

in that day] The day already spoken of so solemnly by Joel; i. 15, ii. 1, 31, iii. 14; cp. ch. xiii. 6, 9, xxxiv. 8.

12. *For the day...*] More exactly; "For the Lord hath a day." He has it in reserve; ready to be brought out, when the time of forbearance is over; ready to come *upon* (or, against) **all** *that is proud and* **high**, *and upon* (or, against) **all** *that is lifted up.*

13. The noblest and most durable trees, on the loftiest mountain ranges, stand as symbols of mighty warriors, in x. 34 (cedars of Lebanon) and Amos ii. 9 (oaks of Bashan; see on i. 31). Cp. Ps. xxix. 5, 6 (where Sirion, or Hermon, corresponds to Bashan here; see Josh. xiii. 11).

Obs. The word rendered "oaks" in i. 29 is used in 2 K. xxiv. 15; "He carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon...and all *the mighty* of the land."

14. *mountains...hills...*] Symbolizing kingdoms (see on *v.* 2).

15. *every high* (**lofty**, *v.* 11) *tower*] Uzziah "built towers in Jerusalem...and fortified them," 2 Chro. xxvi. 9.

every fenced wall] *s.w.a.* in Deut. xxviii. 52; cp. ch. xxv. 2, xxvii. 10, xxxvi. 1; Hos. viii. 14.

16. *ships of Tarshish*] Such as were built for the Ophir-trade at the ports of the Ælanitic Gulf (1 K. xxii. 48). Uzziah had recovered and rebuilt Elah at the beginning of his reign (2 K. xiv. 22). Cp. Ps. xlviii. 7.

pleasant pictures] Nearly the same word as in Lev. xxvi. 1; Num. xxxiii. 52. It seems (from Lev. xxvi. 1) to have included sculptures and fresco-paintings. (Cp. Ezek. viii. 12.)

17. *the haughtiness of men...*] Or, *the haughtiness of* **great** *men shall be* **brought** *low.*

18. *And the idols...*] The marginal rendering gives the correct sense; *the idols* **shall utterly pass away.** Literally, "and the idols—the whole (mass) shall flit away;" like the phantom of a dream. "In a verse consisting of three words, their destiny is declared as with a flash of lightning" (Delitzsch). Cp. Jer. x. 11; Zech. xiii. 2. The Babylonish captivity did make an utter end of Jewish idolatry.

19. *the holes of the rocks*] Or, "caves." The word is used of the "cave" of Machpelah (Gen. xxiii. 9, &c.).

the caves of the earth] Or, "caverns of the **dust**" (as in *v.* 10).

the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

† Heb. *the idols of his silver, &c.* ‖ Or, *which they made for him.*

20 In that day a man shall cast †his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, ‖which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

22 Cease ye from man, whose breath *is* in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

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when he ariseth] out of seeming inaction (xxxi. 2, xxxiii. 10; Ps. vii. 6, ix. 19, xii. 5, &c.).

to shake terribly] The imagery may, perhaps, be drawn from the great earthquake which took place in Uzziah's reign (Amos i. 1). That physical convulsion was a presage of the shaking of the Jewish polity; and this in its turn was a type of a vaster commotion, extending to "all nations." Cp. Hagg. ii. 22.

Obs. Modern science tells us, how a brief outburst of light on the sun's surface has communicated an electric shock to the whole of our globe. (Mr Proctor's 'The Sun.') What, then, would one flashing forth of the Uncreated Light not effect?

20. *In that day a man shall cast*] Rather, **man** (*v.* 22) shall **cast away**. Mankind shall wake up to a sense of their true relation to God.

which they made (each one) for himself...] Or, *which* **had been made for him...**;—those "things of nought" (see on *v.* 8), which had been manufactured at so great cost.

to the moles...] Rather, **for** *the moles and* **for...**;—so confessing how blind they themselves had been; when, refusing to "walk in the light of the Lord" (*v.* 5), they had buried themselves away in the darkness of earthly desires and of foul, grovelling, superstition.

21. *To go into*] Or, "going into."—They fling away their idols, *as they are in the act* of making their escape into "*the clefts of the rocks*" (only elsewhere in Exod. xxxiii. 22).

and into the tops] Rather, **crevices** (*s.w.a.* in lvii. 5; Judg. xv. 8, 11).

22. *Cease ye from man*] Implying that they had habitually (*s.w.a.* in i. 16; Prov. xxiii. 4) trusted in man; and that this was the real cause of their apostasy. The same account of Judah's sin is given in Jer. xvii. 1, 5.

This "*man*," whose doings are viewed with so much inordinate admiration, who makes an idol of his own work, was formed in such a way as seemed expressly meant to "hide pride from man" (Job xxxiii. 17); for he holds his earthly life on the frail tenure of "*the breath* of his nostrils" (cp. Gen. ii. 7; Job xxxiv. 14, 15, 20).

Obs. When God "arose to shake terribly the earth," at the period of antediluvian pride and hero-worship, "all, *in whose nostrils was the breath of life*, died" (Gen. vii. 22).

for wherein...?] In what respect is *he* worthy of account? in what way can *he* be reckoned as having intrinsic worth?—*he*, apart from God. The answer is, "All nations before Him are as nothing; they are accounted (*s.w.*) less than nothing and altogether vanity" (xl. 17).

NOTE A.

ON THE REFERENCES IN ISAI. II. 2—4 TO 2 S. VII AND PS. LXXII.

(1) The allusion to 2 S. vii is evident:

Isai. ii. 2, נכון יהיה הר בית י׳.

2 S. vii. 16, בסאך יהיה נכון עד עולם.

„ 26, בית עבדך ד׳ יהיה נכון לפניך.

(2) The general analogy of *vv.* 2—4 to Ps. lxxii is obvious. But note in particular,

Isai. ii. 2, בראש ההרים.

Ps. lxxii. 16, בראש הרים.

In Ps. lxxii, the King "judges" the poor of the people (*vv.* 2, 4). The "mountains and hills" bear *peace* (*v.* 3, cp. *v.* 7); "all nations" serve Him (*v.* 11, cp. *v.* 17).

Note also, that in *v.* 19 we have, "let the whole earth be filled with His glory;" nearly as in ch. vi it is said of "the King," that "the whole earth is full of His glory" (*v.* 3).

The conclusion is, that ch. ii. 2—4 was meant to assure the faithful, that, amidst the coming judgment on Zion, God's promises to David should stand firm for ever.

Obs. This purpose is made more distinct by the reference to Joel iii. 10 in *v.* 4. For the earlier part of Joel had been full of threatening (cp. on *vv.* 11, 12), while iii. 21 is full of comfort.

NOTE B.

CHH. II—V BELONG TO UZZIAH'S TIME.

That the prophecies in chh. ii—v preceded the death of Uzziah is, undoubtedly, the natural inference from the order in which they stand. And this Jer., Cyril Alex., Theodor., &c. in old times, and of the moderns Hengst., Drechs., &c. understood to be the fact.

The chief reason why others have thought otherwise, is, that they have adopted an error respecting the date of ii. 2—4 (see Note C). The following parallelisms between our chapter and the account of Uzziah's doings in 2 Chro. xxvi and 2 K. xiv will shew how thoroughly the obvious view is supported by investigation.

(1) Isai. ii. 7, iii. 2 allude to martial armaments (iii. 2, גבור ואיש מלחמה).

2 Chro. xxvi. 11—15 speaks of Uzziah's wide-spread fame for military organization (*vv.* 12, 13, גבורי חיל עושה מלחמה).

(2) Isai. ii. 15, "every high tower and every fenced wall."

2 Chro. xxvi. 9, 15, Uzziah built towers and armed them with new engines.

(3) Isai. ii. 16, "ships of Tarshish."

In 2 K. xiv. 22, Uzziah had recaptured Elath; from which "ships of Tarshish" sailed (1 K. ix. 26; cp. xxii. 49).

(4) Isai. iii. 3, "cunning artificers."

2 Chro. xxvi. 15, Uzziah "made in Jerusalem engines, ingenious work of engineers."

(5) In Isai. ii, iii, v, we have the frequent recurrence of the verb גבה and its derivatives (ii. 11, 15, 17, iii. 16, v. 15), in reference to the exaltation of created objects: in contrast with which in v. 16 is יי וינבה.

In 2 Chro. xxvi. 16 the cause of Uzziah's profanation of the sanctuary is assigned thus: גבה לבו.

(6) The strong language of iii. 8, "to provoke the eyes of His glory" (cp. v. 19), exactly accords with the description in 2 Chro. xxvi. 16—19: "He trespassed against the LORD his God,—went into the temple of the LORD,—before the priests in the house of the LORD."

(7) Isai. ii. 11, "the lofty eyes of man shall be brought low."

2 Chro. xxvi. 19—21, the leprosy broke out on Uzziah's forehead; "and they thrust him out from thence, yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him."

NOTE C. (ON II. 2.)

II. 2—4 ISAIAH'S.

The following reasons for taking Isai. ii. 2—4 to be Isaiah's own appear to be conclusive.

1. The title in *v.* 1 requires us to receive them as his, unless there be some insuperable hindrance to our doing so. The argument alleged is, that the passage begins with, "and;" which, it is said, is unsuitable here, though quite in place in Micah iv. 1.

The remarks made above, as to the contrasts between ch. i and chh. ii—vi, shew that the use of the connecting particle here is abundantly justified.

Against the supposition of its having been borrowed from Micah is the fact that chh. ii—v belong (as we have seen) to Uzziah's reign; while Micah began to prophesy in Jotham's reign (Micah i. 1); and it would even appear from Jer. xxvi. 8 that the prophecy, which immediately precedes Micah iv. 1—3, was delivered in Hezekiah's time.

2. The reference to Ps. lxxii is in harmony with other references to the same psalm in Isaiah (see xi. 2, 3, 4, xxxii. 1, 17, xlix. 7, 22, 23, lii. 7, lx. 6, 9).

3. The *language* of the passage is singularly confirmatory of its being Isaiah's:

(*a*) The participle נשׂא in *v.* 2 ("*lifted up* above the hills") occurs besides in Isai. ii. 12, 13, 14, vi. 1, xxx. 25, lii. 13, lvii. 7, 15; but nowhere else in Micah, *or in the whole Bible.* Indeed, after considering the *manner* in which it is used, we might well say that this one word is sufficient to stamp the passage as Isaiah's. The word is used—

In reference to God, in ii. 2, vi. 1 (cp. xxx. 18), lvii. 15.

Of earthly things, in ii. 12, 13, 14, xxx. 25, lvii. 7.

(*b*) Shortly after one of the passages just quoted, xxx. 25, we find another of the characteristic expressions of Isai. ii. 2—4; הר יי (*v.* 3). This (if we except Micah iv. 2) occurs elsewhere only in Gen. xxii. 14; Ps. xxiv. 3; Zech. viii. 3: of which the last looks back to Isai. i. 26.

(*c*) The words "Law shall go forth" (*v.* 3) occur again in li. 4; but nowhere else.

(*d*) שפט and הוכיח are again used, in parallelism, of the Righteous King in xi. 3, 4.

(*e*) The following is not the less convincing for its latency.

The title "God of Jacob" (which is of rare occurrence, see note) is very closely connected in Ps. xx. 1, xlvi. 7, 11 (cp. also xciv. 7, 22) with שגב. Here, in Isaiah, it is followed (*vv.* 11, 17) by a double, and very emphatic, employment of נשגב; which word occurs nowhere else in Micah.

Must we not infer from all this that the passage was certainly written by Isaiah (the great Prophet of the Gentiles)? It seems, therefore, that when Micah had delivered that most definite prophecy of Zion's desolation, he adopted nearly the words of his elder contemporary Isaiah; that so "in the mouth of two witnesses every word might be established."

It is remarkable that the prophet Zechariah (in the chapter just quoted, viii. 22) *joins together* the phrases used by the two witnesses; Isaiah's עמים רבים and Micah's גוים עצומים.

Obs. Micah v. 10—13 appears to look back to Isai. ii. 6, 8: and the יועצך of Micah iv. 9 suggests the thought of a reference to Isai. ix. 6.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The great confusion which cometh by sin.* 9 *The impudency of the people.* 12 *The oppression and covetousness of the rulers.* 16 *The judgments which shall be for the pride of the women.*

FOR, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

2 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,

3 The captain of fifty, and †the honourable man, and the counseller, and the cunning artificer, and the ‖eloquent orator.

4 And I will give [a]children *to be* their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by

† Heb. *a man eminent in countenance.*
‖ Or, *skilful of speech.*
[a] Eccles. 10. 16.

CHAP. III. The conversion of the nations (ii. 2—4) would be preceded by judgments, beneath which idolatry would be wholly annihilated; and the vanity of man, when separated from his God, would be made evident.

But judgment must "begin at the house of God." So now the prophet turns to Judah and Jerusalem, and declares God's sentence (*vv.* 1, 8, 13, 14) against the mighty and wise (*vv.* 2—7), the gay and beautiful (*vv.* 16—24). When God has withdrawn His protection, they will know the value of their humanitarian theories.

That there is an admixture of allegory in the chapter, has been rightly inferred from the relation of *vv.* 6, 7 to *v.* 8. That there is a yet further allegory in *vv.* 16—26 will be shewn in the notes.

1. *the Lord, the LORD of hosts*] The supreme Ruler and Judge (i. 24) will now interpose.

the stay and the staff] In Hebrew the second noun is the feminine of the first. The phrase is equivalent to, "*every kind* of support."

Obs. According to x. 20, l. 10, 2 Chro. xiii. 18, Ps. xviii. 18, the true stay of the nation was God Himself. If He withdrew His hand, —His covenant—the whole fabric, political and ecclesiastical, must collapse.

the whole stay of bread...] Cp. Lev. xxvi. 26. As the verses which follow refer to the gradual weakening of the moral strength of the nation, it seems probable that "bread" and "water" here (as in lv. 1, cp. xxxiii. 16) symbolize the spiritual sustenance which they derived from God.—"For He," said Moses, "is thy life" (Deut. xxx. 20). Their political and social happiness was entirely dependent upon their maintaining His covenant (ib. *v.* 9, 10, 16—18). Cp. especially Amos viii. 11; Jer. xiv. 2, 3; Ezek. vii. 19.

2. *The mighty man*] Cp. on ch. ii, Note B.

the prudent] Or, "the soothsayer" (Del., &c.). But as all the terms in *vv.* 2, 3, except this and the last phrase in *v.* 3, have a good meaning, the rendering of E. V. (and LXX. στοχαστής) may be on the whole best. The man whose knowledge and experience were such that he seemed to divine the future, should be withdrawn.—The gift in itself was good; though, when used for selfish ends (in the way Balaam used his knowledge) it became mere soothsaying.

the ancient] Or, "elder;"—the head of a family; or, alderman of a city (*v.* 14).

3. *honourable man*] Or, "man of high rank" (2 K. v. 1, *s. w.*).

eloquent orator] Or, "skilful enchanter." Probably, the man who abused the power which his oratory gave him over men; and who, instead of instructing them, led them about at will, as if they were fascinated.

4. *I will give children*] Or, **youths** (1 S. ii. 17). Del. observes, "The revival of Solomon's glory (under Uzziah-Jotham) is to be followed by a recurrence of Rehoboam's times" (1 K. xii. 8 ff.). Cp. Eccl. x. 16.

and babes] Lit. "childish things;" "puerilities" (lxvi. 4, *s. w.*).

5. Render: *And the people shall* **oppress** *every one another*, **yea** *every one* **his friend**; *and they shall* **deal** *proudly, the youth against*, &c. The word for "deal proudly" is that from which Egypt had the symbolic name "Rahab" (see on xxx. 7). They would now

his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

6 When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, *saying*, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and *let* this ruin *be* under thy hand:

7 In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be an healer; for in my house *is* neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

8 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings *are* against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

9 ¶ The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide

† Heb. *lift up* the hand.
† Heb. *binder up.*
[a] Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 21. & 19. 5.

be animated by the insolent, rebellious, spirit of Egypt; for they were no longer God's people. He had withdrawn His presence; that presence whose sustaining power—gentle as the pressure of the atmosphere on our bodies—had upheld the various ranks and orders of the social constitution. Anarchy followed.

6, 7, 8. The whole nation, deprived of its support, is now "stumbling" (*v.* 8) in utter weakness, man against man; each seeking support from the other, but all alike helpless;—each wounded by his fall over "the stumbling-block of his iniquity" (Ezek. vii. 19). Such is the force of the allegory, when interpreted in the light of Lev. xxvi. 37; with Jer. xlvi. 12, 16, l. 32, as comments. (Cp. also ch. xxxi. 3, xl. 30, lix. 10, 14; 1 S. ii. 4; Hos. iv. 5, v. 5, xiv. 1, 9; Jer. vi. 21; Ezek. vii. 19; Zeph. i. 3;—in all of which the same word is used which here, *vv.* 6, 8, is rendered by E.V. "ruin.") Judah now in its own land should begin to have that prophetic sentence fulfilled in it.

Obs. The noun (*v.* 6) occurs elsewhere only in Zeph. i. 3, where it is used of "*idols*." The verb (*v.* 8) is expressly applied in 2 Chro. xxviii. 23 to the ruin brought upon Israel by Ahaz's idolatry. "They (the gods of Syria) caused him and all Israel to stumble."

There was but One, who could "bind up" (*v.* 7); the same who had wounded (ch. xxx. 26, lxi. 1; Hos. vi. 1; cp. Hos. xiv. 1). But He, the all-wise physician, saw need first to *cauterize* the wound (*v.* 24), with "the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning" (iv. 4). No human being could do this. Much less could they who "hated judgment" heal (Job xxxiv. 17; where the word rendered "govern" is properly "heal" or "bind up:" *s. w. a.* here).

6. The general weakness should be shared even by the favoured houses, which had so singular hereditary privileges,—the house of Levi (1 S. ii. 27, 30, 31) and the house of David (ch. vii. 17; cp. xxii. 24). Though some faithful men remained, yet none could undertake charge of the "ruin" (lit. "mass of stumbling"). When Judah had been "made naked" by Ahaz (2 Chro. xxviii. 19), the nation's doom was sealed. Not Hezekiah or Josiah, not Isaiah or Jeremiah, could supply "clothing" to hide "the shame of their nakedness" (Rev. iii. 18).

clothing] Such raiment as was among the necessaries of life (Deut. x. 18). It is the word used in Exod. xxii. 27; "that is his only covering; it is his *raiment* for his skin."

be thou our ruler] Or, **judge** (*s. w. a.* i. 10). The words are nearly those which were addressed to Jephthah (Judg. xi. 6), at a time when Israel had "forsaken the Lord," and was in extremity of trouble (ib. x. 9—14). But *now* no "mighty man of valour" would be forthcoming. "The wrath of the Lord" would "arise against His people till there was no remedy" (2 Chro. xxxvi. 16).

7. *shall he swear*] Or, "lift up his voice" (xlii. 2, 11); speaking with deep emotion.

I will not be an healer] Or, "binder up," "surgeon;"—to dress those festering wounds of the nation; which for so long had "not been bound up" (i. 6).

in my house] Even the few, who had food and raiment given them (xxxiii. 16) for their own needs, could not supply the needs of others. (Cp. Matt. xxv. 9.)

8. *Jerusalem is ruined*] Or, "hath stumbled" (see above). Cp. Hos. v. 5.

Judah is fallen] and is lying prostrate. Cp. Amos v. 2: "The virgin of Israel is fallen."

are against the LORD] Strictly, "towards." They have not merely turned away from Him (as in former days), but have directly turned towards Him, to affront Him; to "*provoke the eyes of His glory*;"—as Uzziah had done by his defiant profanation of the sanctuary.

Those "eyes of glory" beamed forth from His Temple in love, ready to bless His faithful people (1 K. ix. 3; cp. Deut. xi. 12; 2 Chro. xvi. 9); but also to destroy the sinners (Amos ix. 4, 8; cp. Lev. xxvi. 17, Ezek. xv. 7).

9. *The shew of their countenance*] Its bold, staring effrontery,—such as can be deciphered without any skill in physiognomy.

it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

10 Say ye to the righteous, that *it shall be* well *with him:* for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

11 Woe unto the wicked! *it shall be* ill *with him:* for the reward of his hands shall be †given him.

12 ¶ *As for* my people, children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, ‖they which lead thee cause *thee* to err, and †destroy the way of thy paths.

13 The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have ‖eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor *is* in your houses.

15 What mean ye *that* ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces

† Heb. *done to him.*
‖ Or, *they which call thee blessed.*
† Heb. *swallow up.*
‖ Or, *burnt.*

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doth witness against them] lix. 12. Cp. Hos. v. 5, vii. 10, "the pride of Israel testifieth to his face" (*s.w.*).

they declare their sin] and publish it; avow it openly.

as Sodom] whose sin cried to heaven (Gen. xiii. 13, xviii. 20, 21, xix. 13); whose inhabitants set the seal to their own condemnation by endeavouring to destroy the one righteous man, who reproved them.

they have rewarded (or, awarded) *evil unto themselves*] According to the law so clearly laid down in Lev. xxvi; Deut. xxviii—xxx; and here briefly summed up in *vv.* 10, 11. The bitter "wages" of sin, when earned, may not be declined. The sinner by his own act and deed seals the irrevocable award. (Cp. Amos v. 14.)

10. *Say ye to*] Or, "of."

that it shall be well with him] Hebr. "that (it is) good:" the words used in Gen. i. 4, 10, 18, 21, 25. The righteous man is in harmony with his Creator's design, and has His blessing resting upon him; so that his work shall bear fruit (Ps. lviii. 11). Even if he fall on evil days, his fruit remains: "his reward is great in heaven."

11. *it shall be ill with him*] Hebr. "(it is) evil." (Cp. Deut. xxx. 15.)

the reward of his hands] Or, "the award of his own hands." They have chosen the vine of Sodom; their grapes will be grapes of gall. (Deut. xxxii. 32.)

12. *children are their oppressors*] Rather, **its** *oppressors* **are babes**; unable to discern between good and evil (Hebr. v. 13, 14); pleased with sweetmeats or toys, and ruled over by women.

The divine prescription was that man should "rule over" woman (Gen. iii. 16, *s.w.*); —over her, who misled by the appearance of good, and by the desire of gaining a "knowledge of good and evil," had brought on herself the evil which God's law had distinctly attached to transgression. From the time of Solomon downward this divine order had been inverted:—for even the wisest of men fell into the puerility of scepticism and superstition; and under the teaching of his queens learnt to prattle about Chemosh and Milcom. His name stands at the head of the list of Israel's oppressors (1 K. xii. 4).

In after days, among the very worst propagators of idolatry were queens Maachah (1 K. xv. 13) and Jezebel's daughter Athaliah (2 K. xi. 1, 18).

they which lead thee cause thee to err (ix. 16)] Or, *they which* **direct** *thee* **lead** *thee* **astray**; cp. Jer. l. 6; Micah iii. 5. The marginal rendering, "they which call thee happy" (Mal. iii. 12, 15), represents vividly the method adopted by the false prophets; who instead of warning the people against the dangers of prosperity, were ever felicitating them upon it, saying, "Peace, peace, where was no peace." But the textual rendering appears to be the preferable one.

and destroy the way of thy paths] obliterating the way-marks, by which thy paths (across the world's wilderness to the Mount of God, ii. 3 *s.w.*) were to be made plain.

So they, inside Israel, have done the work that Balaam ("swallower of people") could not do. They have driven you away from the promised land back into the trackless wilderness.

13. *The* LORD *standeth up*] Or, "hath come forward" (*s.w.a.* Ps. lxxxii. 1).

to judge the people] The **peoples** (Ps. vii. 8): all the peoples of the world; but first of all (*v.* 14) His own special people.

14. *ancients*] See on *v.* 2.

As the latter half of *v.* 12 was a direct address to the persons spoken of in the first half, so here, "**And you**—ye have eaten up, &c.," are the words of God.

You—the kings, and princes, priests and prophets—the guardians and dressers of My vineyard (v. 7), have done the part of ravenous beasts in it (v. 5; Exod. xxii. 4, E.V. 5, *s.w.*).

15. *What mean ye*] What strange perversity has possessed you? "What aileth you?" (Ch. xxii. 1, 16.)

and grind the faces of the poor] Or, their persons and causes. It would seem to mean—

of the poor? saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

16 ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are

grinding them down by unjust decisions, so that they may be afterwards devoured. (Cp. Ps. xiv. 4; Luke xx. 47.)

saith the Lord GOD of hosts]. *The Lord* (Hebr. *Adonay*), **the Lord** *of Hosts* (*s. w. a.* xxii. 12, 14, 15). Cp. on i. 24.

Obs. 1. The social injustice, to which the words in the first instance refer, was the sign of a far deeper wrong done to God's people (as in the case of Eli's sons, 1 S. ii. 17). The "poor" needed, above all, the comfort which God had provided for them by His law; the comfort of knowing that He, the Lord of heaven and earth, had a fatherly regard for them (Lev. xix. 9, 10; Deut. xv. 7—11). The selfishness of the rulers of Judah, in addition to its cruel infliction of temporal wrong, deprived the poor of the practical evidence of religion. "The poor and needy sought water, and there was none; and their tongue failed for thirst" (xli. 17, cp. xxxii. 6). What were the gorgeous ceremonials of the temple to them but a mockery? The victims offered in sacrifice were, in fact, spoil taken from them (cp. x. 2, lxi. 8).

Obs. 2. Hence it is a prominent trait in the character of the Righteous King that He will "judge the poor" (xi. 4; Ps. lxxii. 12, 13). Cp. xiv. 32, xlix. 13; Ps. lxviii. 10.

Obs. 3. Especially to be noted is the fact that in Prov. xxx. 12—14 we have the oppression of the poor mentioned in a passage which is in the closest relation to ch. iv. 4, as well as to chh. ii—v generally. "A generation pure in its own eyes; and yet it has not been washed from its filth (same words as in ch. iv. 4): a generation, oh how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up (cp. ch. ii. 11, v. 15): a generation whose teeth are swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to *devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.*" This is followed in xxxi. 4—9 by the admonition to kings not to "alter the judgment of any of the afflicted" (*v.* 5), but to "plead the cause of the poor and needy" (*v.* 9); and in xxxi. 10—31 by the description of the "virtuous woman," who also "stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, reacheth forth her hand to the needy" (*v.* 20). *That* was the character of the true "daughter of Zion," of whom it was said, "Give her of *the fruit of her hands*" (*v.* 31, cp. *vv.* 10, 11, above).

Obs. 4. Prov. xxx, xxxi, being added by the "Men of Hezekiah" (Prov. xxv. 1), deserve special attention (see Note C to ch. v).

Very different was the character of "the daughters of Zion" now in the decline of the kingdom.

16—24. These verses were, no doubt, applicable, in a literal sense, to the ladies of Jerusalem. The worldliness of the people was reflected in the luxury of the females, and the costly variety of their robes and ornaments; some of them, it would seem, imitated from the sacerdotal vestments, and others certainly borrowed from idolatry.

But that a deeper meaning lay beneath the literal, may be inferred from the relation in which these verses stand to *vv.* 25, 26. The sudden transition from "the daughters of Zion" to Zion herself is very unnatural, unless we observe that, under the description of female attire, there was an allegory aimed at the Levitical Church as a whole.

The grounds for thinking this to be the case are very strong.

1. The phrase, "daughters of Zion," occurs only in iii. 16, 17, iv. 4, and Song of Sol. iii. 11. In iv. 4 it is surrounded by allegory; as, of course, it is in Song of Sol. iii. 11; where the "daughters of Zion" are invited to see the coronation of king Solomon.

2. The sudden inversion of the rhythm at the end of *v.* 24 gives great emphasis to the word "beauty;"—the word used of Zion in Ps. l. 2; Lam. ii. 15 (cp. Ezek. xvi. 14, 15, 25); and of the Church in Ps. xlv. 11 (cp. verb in Song of Sol. iv. 1, 7, 10).

3. Two of the words in the list of ornaments (see Note A) are used by Zechariah in iii. 3—5; an allegorical passage, which plainly refers to ch. iv. 4, and which is followed by another passage (6—9) no less clearly referring to ch. iv. 2.

One of these words occurs *only* here and in Zechariah; the other is found outside Isaiah and Zechariah only in Job xxix. 14 (itself a figurative passage).

4. Several of the terms in the list closely resemble the names of parts of the priestly dress (Exod. xxviii, xxxix) or are otherwise suggestive of allegorical allusions. (See Note A.)

5. The peculiarity in *v.* 16, of the pronominal suffix in "their feet" being masculine, might not deserve attention, if it were not that we find a like indication in the allegorical passage xxxii. 9—12. (See on xxxii. 11.)

These remarks shew that we need not endeavour to determine the exact meaning of the terms here employed (several of which occur here only). The point of importance is to notice:—(*a*) that the multiplied external decoration, being the expression of inward pride and impurity, only made their deformity in God's sight the greater; only made them less like the "holy women of old time," "whose adorning was the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible ornament of a meek

haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and †wanton eyes, walking and ‖mincing *as* they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will †discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of *their* tinkling ornaments *about their feet*, and *their* ‖cauls, and *their* round tires like the moon,

19 The ‖chains, and the bracelets, and the ‖mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the †tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels,

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails.

24 And it shall come to pass, *that*

† Heb. *deceiving with their eyes.*
‖ Or, *tripping nicely.*
† Heb. *make naked.*
‖ Or, *net-works.*
‖ Or, *sweet balls.*
‖ Or, *spangled ornaments.*
† Heb. *houses of the soul.*

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and quiet spirit" (1 Pet. iii. 3, 4): (*b*) that this social immodesty, as it was the offspring, was also a symbol, of the religious irreverence, which made ornate ceremonial observances a cover for habitual neglect of the duties enjoined by the Second Table of the Law. What were the priestly dresses and the "fair beauty" of the temple now but the meretricious ornaments of the apostate city (i. 21)? Cp. Jer. vi. 1, 2.

16. *haughty*] *s.w.a.* in ii. 11, 15, 17, v. 15.

with stretched forth necks] Or, "throat" (lviii. 1); as when a person is shouting.

and wanton eyes] Or, "staring with their eyes." The verb occurs *here only:* and its meaning is only conjectured from a similar verb in Chaldee. Many MSS. and editions have another reading; which means, "lying," or "dealing falsely" (*s. w. a.* in lxiii. 8).

mincing] Or, "taking affectedly short steps" (*here only*). The verb closely resembles that from which the noun for "phylacteries" is derived. These were fastened on the brow "*between the eyes*," and had written on them, among other passages, Deut. vi. 4—9.

making a tinkling] The verb occurs *here only*. The corresponding noun, in *v.* 18, is taken to denote "anklets" (of silver, ivory, or even gold), such as are still used in Syria, Egypt, and India. The noun occurs elsewhere only in Prov. vii. 22.

(A verb of almost the same sound is used in, "They have made them crooked paths," lix. 8.)

17. *smite with a scab*] *Here only.* The verb which gives name to the "scab" of leprosy (Lev. xiii. 2, 6—8, xiv. 56) is almost identical. This would cause the hair to fall off.

discover] Or, "lay bare." The word is used of *razing* a city (Ps. cxxxvii. 7). The noun which follows occurs *here only*. The Vulg., and some Jewish authorities, render "hair;"—a very similar noun being so used (Lev. xix. 27: cp. Jer. xlviii. 45; Lev. xiii. 30).

18. *the bravery*] The *s. w.* is rendered by "comely" in iv. 2. It is applied to the temple in lx. 7, lxiv. 11; to Jerusalem in Lam. ii. 1; to the priestly robes Exod. xxviii. 2, 40; cp. ch. lii. 1.

tinkling ornaments] Or, **anklets**: see on *v.* 16.

cauls] Or, "caps of network:"—cognate to the nouns rendered "broidered (work)" (Exod. xxviii. 4) and "ouches" (ib. 11, 13, 14, &c.).

round tires like the moon] Or, **crescents**. This and the first word in *v.* 19 are the words used in Judg. viii. 26 of the ornaments taken from the kings of Midian. These trinkets formed part of the Ephod, after which "all Israel went a whoring" (Judg. viii. 27).

19. *The chains*] Most moderns, "eardrops."

mufflers] Or, **veils**:—light and tremulous.

20. *bonnets*] Used of the priestly headbands, Exod. xxxix. 28; cp. ch. lxi. 3, 10 (*s. w.*).

ornaments of...] Or, "stepping-chains;" which fastened the two anklets together.

headbands] Or, "sashes" (Jer. ii. 32).

tablets] Or, "scent-boxes." Lit. "houses of soul."

earrings] Rather, **amulets**; charms, worn as a protection against evil.

22. *changeable suits...*] Or, "festal robes." Elsewhere only in Zech. iii. 4.

wimples] Or, "shawls:" Ruth iii. 15.

crisping pins] Or, **sachels**; or, "purses" (2 K. v. 23).

23. *glasses*] Or, "mirrors;" of polished metal. (Cp. viii. 1, *s. w.*)

fine linen] Or, "muslin," Hebr. *sedin*, probably, like our "satin," akin to *sindon*, or Indian-cloth. Elsewhere only in Judg. xiv. 12, 13; Prov. xxxi. 24.

hoods] Rather, **diadems** (lxii. 3; Zech. iii. 5). An allied noun is used of the priestly "mitre," Exod. xxviii. 37, &c.

instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; *and* burning instead of beauty.

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy † mighty in the war. † Heb. *might.*

26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* ‖ † desolate shall sit upon the ground. ‖ Or, *emptied.* † Heb. *cleansed.*

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vails] Or, "scarfs" (elsewhere only in Song of Sol. v. 7).

24. *instead of sweet smell...*] Or, *instead of sweet* **spices** (Exod. xxx. 23, &c.) *shall be* **rot.**—The latter noun occurs elsewhere only in v. 24; but its verb is used in Lev. xxvi. 39: "They that are left of you shall *pine away* in their iniquity."

instead of a girdle] Or, "a well-girt dress."

a rent] Girdle and robe torn asunder by the hand of violence. *Here only.* The LXX., Vulg., and others, "a rope."

well set hair] Lit. "carved work," or "beaten work;" Exod. xxv. 36. So elaborate was the setting of the ringlets.

baldness] The hair being shorn as in deep mourning, Amos viii. 10.

a stomacher] Here only. A cognate word is used in Exod. xxviii. 28 of the blue lace which fastened the High-Priest's breastplate to the ephod; and in Num. xv. 38 of the blue lace which was to be put by Israelites on the tassel of their garments—the tassel, which was to remind them whose they were; "that ye search not after your own heart and your own eyes; after which ye go a-whoring."

burning] Here only. The parallel word in Arabic is commonly used of *cautery*. To human eyes all had looked like the bloom of health,—"the perfection of beauty" (Lam. ii. 15). The wise and good Surgeon came near and removed the gay clothing, and there was seen a festering cancer beneath, which called for the application of "the spirit of burning" (iv. 4).

25. The last word has disclosed the aim of the allegory. Zion herself is to be laid low. The transition is made by the use of a peculiar word, which is used of the members of a community:—

Thy men] The word is used in Deut. ii. 34, iii. 6, of the men of the Amorite cities that were devoted to destruction. Alas! must Zion now be laid under the like ban? (Cp. on i. 31.)

and thy mighty] Lit. "thy might;" the entire body of her mighty men (*v.* 2).

The earlier portion of the chapter appears to be summed up in *v.* 25; the latter in *v.* 26.

26. *her gates*] Or, **doors** (the common meaning of the word). The doors of the queenly city's palace:—or, perhaps, the doors of the temple, once gladdened by thronging crowds of worshippers.

lament and mourn] As those who make wailing for the dead. There are none else to mourn with the disconsolate Zion.

she being desolate, &c.] Lit. "and she shall be purged; on the earth shall she sit." Both expressions are noticeable.

(1) The latter one is easy. It occurs only in xlvii. 1: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, *sit on the ground*;"—in Job ii. 13: "So they *sate down* with him *upon the ground*...; and none spake a word unto him; for they saw his grief was very great:"—and in Lam. ii. 10: "The elders of the daughter of Zion *sit upon the ground*, and keep silence." Most commentators are reminded of the Roman medal in which "*Judæa Capta*" is represented as a woman sitting in an attitude of despairing grief.

Obs. The LXX. has εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐδαφισθήσῃ: with which cp. Luke xix. 44, καὶ ἐδαφιοῦσί σε (a little before the Parable of the Vineyard, xx. 9—16).

The LXX. uses ἔδαφος for "dust" in xxv. 12, xxvi. 5, xxix. 4.

(2) The earlier expression is more difficult. It is used twice (Num. v. 19, 28) of the woman who was subjected to the Trial of Jealousy:—"*be thou free* from this bitter water that causeth the curse" (*v.* 19); "then *shall she be free*, and shall conceive seed" (*v.* 28). As regards the application here, we must bear in mind the complex character that belongs to Zion. As the visible Church, she had been unfaithful;—therefore the "bitter waters" must take effect on her (cp. Jer. ii. 19). They must work out their curse on the body ecclesiastical. The external framework must go to decay. But the true Church, the Holy Seed (vi. 13), could not perish. What to the outward polity was a cause of death, should be only "*purgation*" to the true Zion. The faithful Church would arise after passing through this ordeal, and "put on her beautiful garments" (lii. 1).

Obs. 1. The word is probably used with a similar reference to Num. v in Jer. ii. 35.

Obs. 2. There is an evident allusion to Num. v. 23 in Deut. xxix. 20, 21, 27 (Hebr. 19, 20, 26). Cp. on ch. iv. 4.

Obs. 3. The LXX. has καὶ καταλειφθήσῃ μόνη. The same words occur in John viii. 9; in that wonderful history, which tells how He who was "the Light of the World" exerted "the spirit of judgment." By stooping

down and "writing on the earth," He reminded the seemingly zealous champions of the Law that its curses rested on all who "forsake the Lord" (Jer. xvii. 5, 13). Then, under the scrutiny of that secret Eye, which "searches the hearts and tries the reins" (ib. *v.* 10), they all went forth from the temple; leaving the guilt-stricken woman without an accuser; leaving her alone, to hear from the lips of the one True Priest the sentence, "Go, and sin no more."—So would He now banish "the sinners in Zion" (xxxiii. 14), "her destroyers and them that laid her waste" (xlix. 17); in order that all who remained might "be called holy" (iv. 3).

NOTE A. (*vv.* 16—24.)

1. In Zech. iii. 8 there is an undoubted reference to Isai. iv. 2: "my servant, *the Branch*." But in *v.* 4 Joshua the High-Priest, who was "as a brand plucked out of the fire," —the representative of the elect Church saved out of the fires of Babel,—is clothed with מחלצות: a word that occurs besides only in Isai. iii. 22. This "change of raiment" took the place of his "filthy" garments: the word for "filthy," צואים, being one which occurs only in Zech. iii, but is derived from צואה, which occurs only in Isai. iv. 4, xxviii. 8; Prov. xxx. 12.

Afterwards Joshua has a "mitre" set on his head, צניף, a word which occurs elsewhere only in Isai. iii. 23, lxii. 3, and Job xxix. 14.

2. The following words refer to the priestly dress:

שביסים (*v.* 18): compare תשבץ and מושבצת. This comparison was given by Kimchi, and is admitted by most lexicographers.

שרות (*v.* 19, bracelets); *ἅ. λ.* Cp. שרשרות (chains), Exod. xxviii. 14 (cp. 22); 1 K. vii. 17.

פארים (*v.* 20): *s. w. a.* in Exod. xxxix. 28.

טבעות (*v.* 21): *s. w. a.* in Exod. xxviii. 23—28, &c. It occurs in Exodus 36 times; but elsewhere *only here*.

תפארת (*v.* 18): *s. w. a.* Exod. xxviii. 2, 40.

3. The following lend themselves readily to the allegory:

שפח (*v.* 17), of smiting with (leprous) scab: cp. Lev. xiii. 2. (The "head" containing an allusion to Uzziah.)

ערה (*v.* 17), of laying bare the foundations of a city or house (Ps. cxxxvii. 7; cp. Hab. iii. 13; Zeph. ii. 14).

שהרנים (*v.* 18), and נטיפות (*v.* 19), occur only in the mention of the trinkets taken from the Midianites in Judg. viii (*vv.* 21 and 26). The effect produced by the introduction of these and of the לחשים (*v.* 20) into the list is very like that of the קסם and נבון לחש in *vv.* 2, 3.

בתי נפש (*v.* 20). Cp. the מחמד עיניכם and ומחמל נפשכם of Ezek. xxiv. 21 (of the temple), and בתי חמדה, Ezek. xxvi. 12.

בשם (*v.* 24): Exod. xxx. 23, &c.

מעשה מקשה (ib.); Exod. xxv. 31, 36.

יפי (ib., of Zion), Ps. l. 2; Lam. ii. 15; Ezek. xvi. 14, 15, 25. Cp. Song of Sol. i. 8, 15, &c.

כי. Henderson quotes the Arabic proverb, "After medicine burning (*al-kayy*)."

4. A very slight change is needed for the following:

פתיגיל (*v.* 24), here only. Cp. פתיל, Exod. xxviii. 28; Num. xv. 38.

משקרות (*v.* 16), here only. Cp. מושקר, lxiii. 8; Lev. xix. 11; Ps. xliv. 17; (Jer. vii. 4).

עקס (*v.* 16), here only. But עקש is used of making crooked paths, lix. 8; Prov. x. 9 (cp. Prov. xxviii. 18).

טפוף (*v.* 16), here only. Cp. טוטפות (for מטפטפות) Exod. xiii. 16; Deut. vi. 8, xi. 18. Whilst "the frontlet between the eyes" spoke of the duty of loving God supremely, they "played false" and gazed on their idols of gold and silver.

CHAPTER IV.

In the extremity of evils, Christ's kingdom shall be a sanctuary.

AND in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our

CHAP. IV. At the end of ch. iii we had the picture of Zion, her royal house and her temple, in desolation. It was a fuller delineation of what Amos had foretold: "all the sinners of my people shall die *by the sword*" (Amos ix. 10; cp. ch. iii. 25). But Amos proceeded to say (*v.* 11): "*In that day* will I raise up *the tabernacle* of David which is fallen, ...that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, *upon whom my name is called*, saith the Lord that doeth this." So here Isaiah comes forward with a repeated "In that day" (*vv.* 1, 2) to speak of a restored and ennobled Zion.

1. *seven women shall take hold of one man*] The key to the meaning is supplied by 2 Chro. vii. 12—22 (=1 K. ix. 1—9); where Solomon is told that if Israel "forsook the Lord, their God," and "*took hold of other gods*, and worshipped them," He would root them out of the land He had given them; "and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I

own apparel: only †let us be called by thy name, ‖to take away our reproach.

2 In that day shall the branch of the LORD be †beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and comely †for them that are escaped of Israel.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that he*

† Heb. *let thy name be called upon us.*
‖ Or, *take thou away.*
† Heb. *beauty and glory.*
† Heb. *for the escaping of Israel.*

cast out of my sight, and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword to all peoples."

That this is the force of the verb "take hold of" is further ascertained by its use in xxvii. 5, "let him *take hold of my strength*," in lvi. 4, 6, "(the sons of the stranger) that *take hold of my covenant*;" and in lxiv. 7 (6), "There is none that stirreth up himself to *take hold of Thee*." (Cp. Prov. iii. 18.)

What if Israel had slighted her privileges, and been cast away? God's purpose should not fail. Her loss should be abundantly compensated for; supplied "sevenfold." (Cp. 1 S. ii. 5.) Seven women should "take hold of" the covenant established in, and by, "*the man* whose name is The Branch" (Zech. vi. 12), who should "build the temple of the Lord," and Himself "bear the glory," and "sit as a priest upon His throne" (ib. *v.* 13).

Obs. 1. In Rev. i—iii, *seven* is the mystical number of the branches of the Catholic Church; whose calling is to "hold fast the name" (ii. 13) of Him who was "like unto the Son of Man," yet was "the First and the Last." (Cp. Prov. ix. 1.)

Obs. 2. The word for "man" had been already used allegorically, of God's relation to Israel (in contrast to the *Baalim*), in Hos. ii. 16 (LXX. ὁ ἀνήρ μου). Bp Wordsworth compares 2 Cor. xi. 2.

We will eat our own bread] These new communities would not be, like Israel of old, under God's immediate temporal government; —not planted down by Him in earthly Canaans under promises like those of Lev. xxvi. 4—10, Deut. xxviii. 2—14. Their request would be for the spiritual portion of Israel's privileges. (Cp. 2 Thess. iii. 8—12.)

only let us be called by thy name] This form of expression is, with one exception (2 S. xii. 28), always used of God's name. See *e.g.* Deut. xxviii. 9, 10 ("The Lord shall establish thee *a holy people* unto Himself...and all the peoples of the earth shall see that *the name of the Lord is called upon thee*"); 1 K. viii. 43; 2 Chro. vi. 33, vii. 14; ch. lxiii. 19; Jer. vii. 10, 11, 14, 30, xiv. 9; Dan. ix. 18, 19.

to take away our reproach] The reproach of *barrenness* (Gen. xxx. 23). This reproach belonged to Jew and Gentile alike by nature (Eph. ii. 3); all being dead, and yielding "the unfruitful works of darkness" (ib. v. 11). Only when "quickened together with Christ" (ib. ii. 5), could any bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit." (Cp. *vv.* 2, 3.) See also xxv. 8, liv. 4; Jer. xxxi. 19; Lam. v. 1.

2. David's covenant — the "everlasting covenant" (2 S. xxiii. 5)—instead of "germinating" (ib.), had seemed to be stricken with barrenness, and made utterly "void" (Ps. lxxxix. 39). But "in that day" it shall be established by One who is here called,—

the branch of the LORD] Not the same word as in xi. 1 (*nétser*). The word here used (*tsemach*) is the one that occurs in Jer. xxiii. 5, Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12, of King Messiah. It denotes a budding or springing plant; "a sprout." The verb from which it comes is used in xliii. 19, xlv. 8, lxi. 11; Deut. xxix. 23 (22); 2 S. xxiii. 5; Ps. lxxxv. 11, cxxxii. 17.

Obs. 1. The sentence on the unfaithful land, Deut. xxix. 23 (22), was: "It shall not be sown, nor send forth bud (*s. w.*)." Now the curse is to be removed by One in whom is divine life; "the second man, the Lord from heaven;" who is "a life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47). Though God's "pleasant plant" (v. 7) were rooted up, He abode for ever "the True Vine" (John xv. 1).

Obs. 2. Zech. vi. 12 identifies the "man" of *v.* 1 with this divine "Sprout:" as the King of righteousness is in a like pointed way called "a man," in xxxii. 1, 2;—before the allegory respecting the "women that are at ease" (*v.* 9).

be beautiful and glorious] It is better to render lit., **for ornament and for glory**; as in the next clause to render the words "excellent and comely" lit., **for majesty and for beauty**. The words "glory" and "beauty" are those which are used in Exod. xxviii. 2, 40 of the priestly robes: so that here we have the antithesis of the allegorical description in iii. 16—24. His holiness would be the reality, of which the "holy attire" was but a figure.

Obs. 1. In Heb. vii, where the "Priest for ever after the style of Melchizedek" is placed in antithesis to the Levitical Priesthood, and it is remarked that "our Lord *sprang out of* Judah," the verb used (ἀνατέταλκεν "sprouted") is the same that is used by the LXX. in xliii. 19, &c.; Deut. xxix. 23; Ps. lxxxv. 11; Zech. vi. 12.

Obs. 2. The word for "majesty" is the same that was used in ii. 10, 19, 21 of God's own majesty.

Obs. 3. In xxviii. 5, it is said: "In that day the Lord of Hosts shall be for a crown of *ornament* (*s. w.*), and for a diadem of *beauty* (*s. w.*) to the remnant of His people." (Cp. lx. 19.)

and the fruit of the earth] He who was "the sprout of the Lord" was also "the fruit

that is left in Zion, and *he that* remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, *even* every one that is written ‖ [1]among the living in Jerusalem: ‖ Or, *to life.*

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of the earth" (cp. xlv. 8; Ps. lxxxv. 11); of this sin-stained earth; for he took the curse away when He became as "a grain of wheat that falls into the earth and dies," and so "brings forth much fruit."

Delitzsch observes: "He was the grain of wheat, which redeeming love sowed in the earth on Good-Friday: which began to break through the ground and grow toward heaven on Easter Sunday; whose golden blade ascended heavenward on Ascension-Day; whose myriad-fold ear bent down to the earth on the day of Pentecost, and poured out the grains from which the holy Church not only was born, but still continues to be born."

Obs. 1. As the word Ἀνατολή, used by the LXX. in Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12 for "Branch," is used of the rising of the sun (Judg. v. 31, cp. on Luke i. 78), and (in the plural) of the East; so our *Easter* is probably from the same root as *East.*

Obs. 2. In Jer. xxiii. 5 we read: "I will raise up (LXX. ἀναστήσω) unto David a righteous Branch:" and in Rom. i. 2—4 our Lord's "resurrection from the dead" is spoken of as definitively declaring the divine sonship of Him, who was "born of the seed of David according to the flesh." In Him alone could "the tabernacle of David which was fallen down" be raised up out of its ashes (Amos ix. 11, LXX. ἀναστήσω).

Obs. 3. After speaking of Himself as a seed that should fall into the ground and die, Jesus again spoke of Himself as "the Light" of the world (John xii. 35).—"Light," yet "sown" (Ps. xcvii. 11); what then is the harvest? What, but that which was foretold in Ps. lxvii?—God makes His face to shine on His people; all the nations are glad and sing for joy; the earth yields her increase.

Obs. 4. Through Him, "the first-fruits," the bodies of the sanctified, sown in corruption and dishonour and weakness, shall be raised in incorruption and glory and power (1 Cor. xv. 42—44).

for them that are escaped of Israel] that have survived that crisis of judgment. That there should be such a remnant had been foretold by Joel, ii. 32 (H. iii. 5, *s. w.*). Cp. Obad. *v.* 17. Of this there was a historical type in the deliverance which Isaiah himself lived to see (xxxvii. 31, *s. w.*).

Another historical type was supplied by the remnant who returned from Babylon. But the prophecy was adequately fulfilled only in those who "saved themselves" (Acts ii. 47) from the generation which rejected Christ. That remnant was the germ of the Church Catholic; made such by being incorporated into the True Vine. Partaking of His vital power, they "brought forth much fruit" (John xv. 5, 8); and sending out new suckers beyond the limits of Canaan, they "brought forth fruit in all the world" (Col. i. 6, cp. Rom. i. 13); fruit which was to them "a crown of rejoicing" (1 Thess. ii. 19; cp. Rom. xv. 16, 17), as a testimony to the mighty power of Him in whom alone they gloried (1 Cor. i. 31).

3. *shall be called holy*] Realizing Israel's original vocation, Exod. xix. 6; Deut. xxviii. 9. So the first Christians were actually called (Acts ix. 13).

Obs. In Rom. i. 5—7 the title κλητοὶ ἅγιοι ("holy by vocation") is given to all who are in Christ.

that is written among the living] Or, "unto life;" registered as heirs of eternal life (Luke x. 20; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. xvii. 8; cp. Exod. xxxii. 32, 33; Ps. lxix. 28; Dan. xii. 1; Heb. xii. 23).

Obs. In Acts xiii. 46, 48 the Jews, who rejected the word of God, "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life;" while the Gentiles "glorified the word of the Lord, and believed, as many as were ordained to eternal life."

4—6. Vitringa and Delitzsch (like our authorized version) connect *v.* 4 with what precedes. But the particle with which *v.* 4 opens nearly always introduces the protasis of a sentence (so Knob. and Ew. here). It is better, therefore, to put a full stop at the end of *v.* 3, and a colon at the end of *v.* 4; and to commence *v.* 5, "Then will the Lord create."

This division is also favoured by the rhythm of *v.* 3; by the fact that the Masoretes end their first section (*seder*) with *v.* 3; and by the sense of the following verses. The order of thought is that of Ps. li.:—*First:* "Wash me throughly from my iniquity; create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a stedfast spirit within me." *Then,* "Do good unto Zion; accept the sacrifices of righteousness, the burnt-offerings that now mount up on Thy altar." So too in 2 Cor. vi. 16, the promise, "I will dwell among them and walk among them," is to be fulfilled to those who "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit (ib. vii. 1)."

The verses teem with allegory. The two leading truths figured in them are these:

(1) The Church can become truly God's house only when it is a purified "whole offering," a "living" sacrifice, "transformed by a renewing of mind" (Rom. xii. 1, 2).

(2) When that is realized, then it is filled with divine glory,—is the true spouse of Christ,—and has His protection.

4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

4. *When the Lord shall have washed away*] *Their* efforts had been altogether superficial (cp. i. 16, 25); mere ritual cleansing; so that their "righteousnesses were as a filthy garment" (lxiv. 6). As Bathsheba had observed punctiliously the ceremonial "sanctifying from uncleanness," while she was guilty of conjugal infidelity (2 S. xi. 4; cp. Num. v. 19); so the Jewish Church amidst its apostasy boasted, "The temple of the Lord are these" (Jer. vii. 4), and said, "I am innocent" (Jer. ii. 35). But the prophet told her: "Though thou wash thee with nitre and take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God" (Jer. ii. 22).

Therefore God Himself must cleanse her. (i. 25; Ezek. xxxvi. 17—31).

the filth of the daughters of Zion] of the generation that was "pure in its own eyes:" see Prov. xxx. 12 (quoted above on iii. 15, and Note A). That this purification was not effected by the Babylonish captivity, is evident from Mal. iii. 1, 2; "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope." (Cp. also Mal. ii. 3; Phil. iii. 8.)

and shall have purged] A rare word, which is used in 2 Chro. iv. 6 and Ezek. xl. 38 of rinsing parts of the "burnt-offering." The only other place where the word occurs is Jer. li. 34. The LXX. has here ἐκκαθαριεῖ.

the blood of Jerusalem] Or, **bloodguiltiness**. (See on i. 15; cp. 2 S. xvi. 7; Joel iii. 21; Ezek. xxii. 2—15.)

the midst thereof] Or, "within her," *s.w.a.* in Deut. xiii. 5 (H. 6), "So thou shalt burn away the evil *from within thee*" (also *with the same verb* in Deut. xvii. 7, xix. 19, xxi. 21, xxii. 21, 24).

The same word is used of "the inwards" of the burnt-offering, which were to be "washed with water" (Lev. i. 9, 13) before being offered. (Cp. Lev. viii. 21, ix. 24.)

Obs. 1. He, who was the one only substitute for the legal offerings, said, "I delight to do Thy will, O God; yea, Thy law is *within* (lit.) my bowels" (Ps. xl. 8).

Obs. 2. Only when the law was written in the "inward parts" (*s.w.*) of Israel (Jer. xxxi. 33) could they become truly His people; —only so could the Holy One dwell "in the midst of (*s.w.*) Zion" (ch. xii. 6).

But how was this cleansing to be effected?

by the spirit of judgment (xxviii. 6)] Cp. i. 17, 21, 27, v. 16. The King, the Branch, on whom "the Spirit of the Lord" would rest, would "not judge after the sight of His eyes," but "with the breath (spirit) of His mouth He would slay the wicked" (xi. 3, 4). Cp. iii. 14, ix. 7; Mal. iii. 5.

and by the spirit of burning] Or, "of extermination." It is the word used in Deut. xiii. 5, &c. (quoted above); and also in 1 K. xiv. 10, "I will *clear away* (or burn) after the house of Jeroboam, as a man *cleareth away* (or burneth) dung, till it be consumed." (See also 2 K. xxiii. 24; 2 Chro. xix. 3; Ezek. xxi. 4, *s.w.*)

It is evident that "*washing*"—*by* "*a spirit*" —and that "of *burning*," must be allegorical. The allegory is explained only, and fully, by the N. T.

(1) John Baptist spoke of the King, whose approach he heralded, as one who should "*baptize* with the *Holy Spirit* and with *fire;*" and the effect of this would be to "throughly purge (διακαθαριεῖ) His threshing-floor," leaving the chaff to be "burnt with unquenchable fire" (cp. Ezek. xxi. 4). This twofold result—on the hearts of individuals, and on the Church as a community—is more plainly set forth by St Paul.

(2) In 1 Cor. v. 13 (cp. *v.* 2), he *quotes* the words of Deut. xvii. 7 (LXX.), ἐξαρεῖτε τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν: this "extermination" being now made by a spiritual sentence, pronounced "*in the name of* our Lord Jesus Christ" (cp. Isai. iv. 1); "when ye are gathered together, and *my spirit*, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ" (ib. *v.* 4).

But in the next chapter he proceeds to speak of the character of the individuals, who shall "inherit the kingdom of God," and he describes them as "*washed, sanctified*, justified, *in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (cp. Isai. iv. 1) "and *by the Spirit of God.*" (Cp. the Collect at the opening of the Communion Service.)

Similarly: in 2 Cor. vi. 14—18 he speaks of the cleansing of God's household from communion with the unbelieving or the sinful; and in vii. 1 of individual Christians "perfecting holiness" by "cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and *of the spirit.*"

Obs. 1. In this twofold cleansing we have the explanation of the enigmatic relation between the "daughters of Zion," and "the daughter of Zion." The latter term represents the community: the former its individual members.

Obs. 2. Both processes of cleansing go on together, and hence the correlation of "daughters of Zion" and "Jerusalem" in *v.* 4.

Obs. 3. As under the old covenant the "burning" of the apostate city was to be a literal one (Deut. xiii. 16), Josephus was speaking more truly than perhaps he intended when he assigned a moral significancy to the flames which he saw approaching the temple ('J. W.' VI. 2). "Is not the city—yea, and all

5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a [a] cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for [‖] upon all the glory *shall be* [†] a defence.

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the

[a] Exod. 13. 21.

[‖] Or, *above.*
[†] Heb. *a covering.*

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the temple too—filled with your corpses? Then, it is God, God Himself, who, siding with the Romans, is bringing on it *purgative fire* (καθάρσιον πῦρ), and is sweeping away a city laden with such pollutions."

The first temple was doomed to fire because Manasseh "filled Jerusalem with innocent blood" (2 K. xxi. 16); can it be doubted that the second temple suffered from a like cause? See Matt. xxvii. 24, 25. From the guilt of that crime, however, the people shall be cleansed "in that day" (Zech. xii. 10, xiii. 1).

5. In old time, when Israel was in the wilderness, wherever the people were to be stationary, there rested on, or over, the Tent of Meeting *a cloud by day* and the appearance of *fire by night* (Exod. xl. 34—38; Num. ix. 15—23); while "the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. xl. 34, 35).

Now a new thing should be "created" (cp. xliii. 15, 19, 21, xlviii. 7, lvii. 19, lxvi. 17). *Upon*, or over, *every dwelling* (or "place;" the word is commonly used of the temple, *e.g.* 1 K. viii. 13, 39) *of Mount Zion* (ii. 2, 3), *and upon*, or over, *all her assemblies* (i. 13, *s.w.*), there should be the like manifestations of God's presence.

Again the interpretation is made clear by the N. T. "Where two or three are *gathered together in My Name* (cp. 1 Cor. v. 3, 4) there am I *in the midst of them*" (Matt. xviii. 19), were the words of Him who had just before "received honour and glory from God the Father, when there was brought to Him such a voice by the excellent glory (out of the "*bright*" *cloud*, Matt. xvii. 5); This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (2 Pet. i. 16, 17).

Obs. 1. The LXX. has for "every dwelling," πᾶς τόπος: cp. 1 Tim. ii. 8, ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ.

Obs. 2. In Heb. xii. 22, all Christians are spoken of as "come unto *Mount Sion*," and, it is added, "to the Church of the first-born, *whose names are written in heaven*" (cp. *v.* 3 above).

Obs. 3. Of old the cloud rested only on the tabernacle into which the priests alone went; now it is over all the assemblies of Zion. For now the Church is "His body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23).

Obs. 4. The "smoke" of this verse is not mentioned in Exod. xl or Num. ix. It seems to be derived from Song of Sol. iii. 6; "Who is this that *cometh up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke*, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?" (cp. Joel ii. 30.) The Bride of Christ, "sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water with the word" (Eph. v. 26), throughout her pilgrimage breathes forth prayers in the name of Christ, which ascend as fragrant incense to heaven.

the shining of a flaming fire] Lit. "the brightness of a fire of flame." "Mount Sion" is attended by "myriads of angels" (Heb. xii. 22), "sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation" (ib. i. 14); and these ministers of God's good pleasure are as "*a flaming fire*" (Ps. civ. 4), to protect the Church in "the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do roam" (ib. *v.* 20); comforting the night of affliction with heavenly visions confirmatory of God's covenant (Gen. xxviii. 11, 12).

Obs. 1. The verses which follow the passage just quoted from Song of Sol. iii illustrate this. Round about the bed of Solomon are "threescore mighty ones" (see Ps. ciii. 20, *s.w.*) "of Israel's mighty ones...each having his sword upon his thigh *because of the nightly terror*" (cp. Ps. xci. 5).

Obs. 2. The tomb of "the Son of Man" was guarded by angels; and angels carried the soul of Lazarus to "Abraham's bosom." So, when the twelve hours of the day are over, and the night comes when no man can work, the "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23) are not left in darkness or without angelic ministrations. The gates of Hades are powerless as to those who have "died in the Lord." The cloud of mediatorial glory is over "every place" in the Church universal—the part which is militant or the part which is expectant. (Cp. Rev. i. 18.)

for upon (or, over) *all the glory shall be a defence*] Or, "a canopy," like that under which a marriage ceremony was performed. (Ps. xix. 5, *s.w.*)

Over the whole Church, the temple of living stones, "builded together for a habitation of God *through the Spirit*" Eph. ii. 22 (mystically described as "the King's daughter, *all-glorious inwardly*," Ps. xlv. 13), there is spread the cloud by day and fire by night. So the bride is borne across the wilderness of human history until the time of her outward glorification arrives.

6. *And there shall be a tabernacle*] Or, "booth;" *s.w.a.* in i. 8; Ps. xviii. 11 ("His pavilion"), xxxi. 20 (in parallelism with "the shelter of Thy presence").

The same word is used in Amos ix. 11 (see on *v.* 1), "*the tabernacle* of David that is

heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Under the parable of a vineyard God excuseth his severe judgment.* 8 *His judgments upon covetousness,* 11 *upon lasciviousness,* 13 *upon impiety,* 20 *and upon injustice.* 26 *The executioners of God's judgments.*

NOW will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved

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fallen down." The tabernacle, for which David took so much thought—the temple for which he made so much provision—the royal house which he founded—this has all "fallen," as Israel fell, by the "iniquity" that grew up within it. (Hos. xiv. 1.)

Now it is raised up to be "for a shadow from heat; and for a refuge, and covert from storm and rain." Nearly the same description is given in xxxii. 2 of the Righteous King Himself. "And *a man*" (see on *v.* 1 above) "shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the storm; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

The "Branch of the Lord" is Himself the restored "Tabernacle of David."

Obs. 1. The Lord Himself is the Church's "shadow by day," Ps. cxxi. 5, 6.

Obs. 2. He is her "shadow from heat;" ch. xxv. 4 (*s.w.*).

CHAP. V. The last three chapters began and ended with telling of the glory of a restored Zion. But the body of the prophecy was full of rebuke and threatening as regarded the existing community.

In the present chapter we have sentence formally pronounced upon Israel and Judah. The sentence (as in Nathan's message to David, 2 S. xii. 1—12) is introduced by a parable in which their guilt is set forth.

We have already had "the daughter of Zion" compared to "a booth in a vineyard" (i. 8), and the princes of Judah charged with "eating up" (or "burning") God's vineyard. The latter was a dark saying, waiting to be explained in the present chapter (see *v.* 5).

Ch. v is closely connected with ch. iv: to which it is a mournful antithesis. Instead of the beauteous "*fruit of the earth*" (iv. 2; *s.w.a.* in Num. xiii. 20, 26, Deut. i. 25 *only*) are seen "wild grapes." Even the "storm" there brought rain to fertilize the land (iv. 6;—cp. 1 K. xviii. 41, 45); here the clouds are bidden to "rain no rain upon it" (*v.* 6);—the tempest in reserve for it being one of devouring fire (*v.* 24) and rattling war-chariots (*v.* 28).

Obs. The recurrence in *v.* 5 of the verb rendered "burning" in iv. 4 is striking. That "burning" was to *purify* the Church from dead members, and from the remains of inward corruption. *Both* these "purgings" are spoken of in John xv. 1—6; "Every branch that beareth fruit, He *purgeth it*" (*v.* 2); and "if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth... and *burned*" (cp. on vi. 13). See also Jer. ii. 21, 22 (which unites Isai. iv and v).

The comparison of Israel to a vineyard (the germ of which is found in Gen. xlix. 11, 22) is drawn out in Ps. lxxx. 8—16. It is implied in various parts of the Song of Songs. One passage of the Song (viii. 14) appears to be here distinctly referred to. For—

(1) The word rendered "my beloved" (*v.* 1) is found in twenty-six places of the "Song," but *nowhere else* except in the present passage.

(2) One of those places is the last verse of the Song; and on going back three verses we read (lit.) "A vineyard was there to Solomon in *Baal-Hamon*" (Song of Sol. viii. 11); corresponding to (*v.* 2), lit., "A vineyard was there to my well-beloved in *Keren Ben-Shemen;*"—the word for "well-beloved" being that which forms the first part of the name given by God to Solomon, *Yedid*-yah (see Note below); while each of the names, Baal-Hamon and Keren-Ben-Shemen, is replete with significancy. (See Note B, below.)

For the present it may suffice to say,

(*a*) That *hamon* occurs twice in the present chapter (*vv.* 13, 14); and

(*b*) That since "*Keren-shemen*" (horn of oil) is a combination which occurs only in 1 S. xvi. 1, 13 (of Samuel's anointing David), and in 1 K. i. 39 (of Solomon's being anointed by *Zadok*); whilst "ben-shemen" is equivalent to "anointed:" we may infer that "keren-ben-shemen" means "the horn of the anointed" (1 S. ii. 1).

(3) The latter part of Solomon's Song, viii. 11, "Every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand silverlings," is referred to in ch. vii. 23 (which looks back to v. 6).

We conclude, then, that a special reference is intended to the Davidic Covenant, and to the Temple of Solomon as the seal of that Covenant: although the parable applies to Israel at large (*v.* 7).

Israel, the "seed of Abraham, the friend of God" (xli. 8), was a Vine of a noble stock, whose wine was to "gladden God and men" (Judg. ix. 13). It was planted amidst rich privileges, temporal and spiritual;—in a land that flowed with milk and honey and had the sanctifying presence of the Holy One with it. If the Vine had produced its fruit, it would have been a "blessing to all nations;" making the "righteousness" of faithful Abraham (Gen. xv. 6) to overflow the earth. But Israel in the first cycle of its history—like the Nazirite Samson in the valley of Sorek—was seduced by the world; and became "a mockery" to its neighbours.

touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a [a]vineyard in [†]a very fruitful hill:

2 And he [‖]fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also [†]made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will

[a] Jer. 2. 21. Matth. 21. 33. Mark 12. 1. Luke 20. 9.
[†] Heb. *the horn of the son of oil.*
[‖] Or, *made a wall about it.*
[†] Heb. *hewed.*

The blessing of Abraham was not realized under the "Tabernacle at Shiloh." The true "Shiloh" was to come from Judah, God's "pleasant plant."

Then richer privileges still were granted to David. The promise that had belonged to Israel at large was attached more peculiarly to David's house. Yet that also brought forth "wild grapes;" as if it had not been anointed out of that "horn of oil" which the high-priest brought from the sanctuary (1 K. i. 39). The "mercies" granted to David were not realized under the temple built by Shelomoh, the "well-beloved of the Lord" (2 S. xii. 24, 25).

What more could be done, than had been done?

Obs. The infinite goodness of God found a way of doing more; more than "since the beginning of the world had been heard of" (lxiv. 4). "The Lord of the vineyard said, *What shall I do?* (τί ποιήσω; as LXX. at *v.* 4.) I will send MY BELOVED SON" (Luke xx. 13). When it was found that even His "gracious" presence (John i. 14) only intensified the malignity of the false "children of Abraham" (John viii. 39), then the vineyard was finally given up to burning (cp. on iii. 26). The "sceptre" departed, for *the "Shiloh"* was then come;—the "Son of David and Son of Abraham" (Matt. i).

1. *Now will I sing*]—Or, "I would fain sing" (or, "Let me now sing")—*to my wellbeloved*] Since the words "I will sing to..." occur elsewhere only in Exod. xv. 1, Judg. v. 3, Ps. xiii. 6, civ. 33, cxliv. 9, and always have *the Lord* for their object; it is evident that the "Well-beloved" is (not, as the Targum takes it, Israel, but) the Divine Person spoken of in ch. iv. 2. (Cp. Note A.)

a song of my beloved]—a song, which the Church's Spouse has given to me;—as of old "His Spirit spoke by" David (2 S. xxiii. 2).

in a very fruitful hill] See Note B.

2. *And he fenced it*] So LXX. φραγμὸν περιέθηκα (cp. Matt. xxi. 33); and similarly the Vulg., Aben-Ezra, Rashi. Cp. *v.* 5, where both a "hedge" and a "wall" are mentioned.

The Law was like a fence to separate Israel from the idolatrous nations. Vitringa quotes Eph. ii. 14; "the middle wall of fence" (φραγμοῦ).—Even the physical geography of Palestine, with its Desert, Sea, Lebanon, and Jordan, assisted in securing their isolation.

the stones] which made the land barren.—The idolatrous races of Canaan (Ps. xliv. 2, lxxx. 8; cp. Matt. iii. 9). "Lapideos deos et illorum cultores" (Grotius).

and planted it] *s. w. a.* Gen. ii. 8. Israel was to have been, as Paradise might have been, a centre of dispersion, from which the rivers of the water of life, and the fruit of the tree of life, should spread over the world. (Cp. lx. 21, lxi. 3, 11; 2 S. vii. 10; Ps. lxxii. 16; Ezek. xvii. 8, xxxvi. 36.)—For another remarkable instance of the use of the word, see Note C.

the choicest vine] Hebr. *Soreq*: elsewhere only in Gen. xlix. 11 (*fem.*) and Jer. ii. 21 ("*a noble vine*, wholly a faithful seed;" LXX. ἄμπελον καρπόφορον πᾶσαν ἀληθινήν).

a tower] Jerusalem, or Zion: the City where God placed *His Name*, which is "a strong tower" (Prov. xviii. 10);—where also God's priests and prophets *kept watch*. (Cp. 2 K. xvii. 9; ch. xxvii. 3; Jer. vi. 17.)

made a winepress] Rather, **hewed out a wine-vat**;—a reservoir into which the wine should run. The temple; as the receptacle of the gifts and offerings, which should testify of the people's gratitude to God.

and he looked...] Or, **waited for it** to... Cp. James v. 7. (LXX. ἔμεινα.)

wild grapes] Or, grapes that never ripened;—no better than the small, harsh-flavoured, berries of the wild vine. (Cp. Deut. xxxii. 32; Jer. ii. 21.) Symm. ἀτελῆ: Aq. σαπρίας. Some make the song to end here. But it is better (see *v.* 5 especially) to suppose it continued to the end of *v.* 6; in the last clause of which preparation is made for passing to the direct application of the song.

4. *What could have been done more*] Or, "What more can be done...?"

5. *And now go to; I will tell you*] Or, "And now, I would fain let you know..." The grammatical form is the same as in *v.* 1:—as if maintaining the disguise of the lyrical allegory. The sternness is in the words that follow; which come in with the utmost ab-

take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; *and* break down the wall thereof, and it shall be †trodden down:

† Heb. *for a treading.*

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel, and the men of Judah †his pleasant plant: and

† Heb. *plant of his pleasures.*

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ruptness: lit. "taking away...breaking down;" ="there is nothing else for it but to take away, &c."

the hedge thereof] The thorn-hedge (Hos. ii. 6).

it shall be eaten up] Or, "burnt" (see on iv. 4). The same words recur in vi. 13. Cp. Heb. vi. 8 (εἰς καῦσιν: the LXX. has καύσεως in iv. 4).

In iii. 14 the princes were charged with having "burnt," or "devoured," God's vineyard. Their sins caused a withdrawal of covenant privileges from the nation; injuring the "poor," who had not shared their guilt.

the wall] outside the hedge (Num. xxii. 24, *s. w.*).

trodden down] as by the feet of animals (see on i. 12): *s. w. a.* xxviii. 18. Cp. Luke xxi. 24 (πατουμένη),—For 1800 years it has been so trampled on "by the Gentiles."

6. *lay it waste*] Or, "make it a waste," nearly *s. w. a.* vii. 19.

digged] Or, "hoed:" *s. w. a.* vii. 25.

briers and thorns] *s. w. a.* in vii. 23, 24, 25, ix. 18, x. 17, xxvii. 4 (the other "vineyard" song). The latter of the two words is peculiar to Isaiah. (Cp. xxxii. 13.)

Obs. 1. The sentence is like an echo of the curse in Gen. iii. 18. But here the range of the curse is quite different. The world at large is blessed (ch. xlv. 8, iv. 2) through the Second Adam;—it is only (as in the case of Gideon's fleece) one small spot that is unblest.

Obs. 2. Even literally the sentence has been fulfilled. "No country in the world has such variety and abundance of thorny plants as Palestine in its present desolation." Rev. H. Macmillan; 'Min. of Nat.' p. 103 ff. (He mentions "giant thistles, growing to the height of a man on horseback;" impenetrable "thickets of buckthorn;" and "*bare hill sides* studded with Paliurus and Tribulus.")

I will also command the clouds] Or, "lay commands on the clouds." Cp. Lev. xxv. 21, "I will *command* my blessing."

Here the allegory suddenly unveils itself. The Speaker is One, at whose bidding the clouds alter their course. (Cp. Amos iv. 7.)

Yet underneath the discovered meaning, there lies a yet further allegory. The doctrine of the Law and the Prophets had long dropped on Israel as "rain and dew" (Deut. xxxii. 2; cp. ch. lv. 10). These should now be withdrawn.

7. *For*] This seems as if meant to justify the last expression in *v.* 6;—which brought about the dénouement of the parable.

house of Israel] The whole people; as in xiv. 1, xlvi. 3, lxiii. 7.

his pleasant plant] Lit. "the plant of His delight," *s. w. a.* in Prov. viii. 31; where "the Wisdom of God" speaks of having His "delights" with the sons of men.

Obs. From the first "Judah was God's sanctuary" (Ps. cxiv. 2), in virtue of the promise in Gen. xlix. 10. Judah's pre-eminence lay in the fact, that from him "Salvation" was to come (John iv. 20) through Him who "was from the beginning with God" (John i. 2), "near Him, as one brought up with Him, (*His*) *delight* daily, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov. viii. 30).

looked for judgment] Or, "waited for" it (*v.* 2). "Judgment," as frequently, represents the execution of justice and equity (i. 17:—cp. Matt. xxiii. 23).

but behold oppression] The word occurs only here. From the use of the verb in xiv. 1, 1 S. ii. 36, the noun might mean "partizanship," "favouritism," or the like: or, again, "wrongful annexation." LXX. ἀνομία.

a cry] from those who were wronged or oppressed: Ps. ix. 12; Job xxxiv. 28.

In the Hebrew the words in each pair,—"judgment...oppression," "righteousness...a cry,"—are marked by strong assonance: intimating (as Delitzsch remarks) that the worthless grapes bore an outward resemblance to the good,—while in reality they were quite of an opposite quality.

Such was the character of those who were reproved in Matt. xxiii. 28: "appearing just outwardly to men, inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity (ἀνομίας)."

Obs. 1. Bp Wordsworth notices that, as a series of "Woes" (*vv.* 8—22) follows the Parable of the Vineyard here, so a like series was denounced by our Lord shortly after His utterance of His "Vineyard" Parable (Matt. xxiii. 13—29).

Obs. 2. Then followed the sentence, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (ἔρημος)" (xxiii. 38, xxiv. 2); and the prediction of "the Son of Man coming in His glory and all His holy angels with Him," and of His "sitting upon the throne of His glory" (Matt. xxv. 31; cp. xxiv. 30);—corresponding to what is depicted in the Vision of ch. vi.

he looked for judgment, but behold [†]oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

[†] Heb. *a scab.*

8 ¶ Woe unto them that join [b] house to house, *that* lay field to field, till *there be* no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

[b] Micah 2. 2.

9 [‖] In mine ears *said* the LORD of hosts, [†] Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, *even* great and fair, without inhabitant.

[‖] Or, *This is in mine ears, saith the LORD, &c.*

[†] Heb. *If not, &c.*

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.

11 ¶ [c] Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may

[c] Prov. 23. 29, 30.

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8. *house...field...*] Violating the fundamental law of property in Israel, Num. xxxvi. 7. This law was based on the fact that "the land was the Lord's;" the people being only feudatory tenants; or even "sojourners with Him" (Lev. xxv. 23, 24). The injustice here reproved, therefore, presupposed ungodliness. Cp. Mic. ii. 1, 2 (Matt. xxiii. 13).

Obs. 1. The typical instance of this wrong was the seizure of *the vineyard of Naboth*, from which even Ahab shrank (1 K. xxi. 1—7).

Obs. 2. In its essence, "πλεονεξία is idolatry" (Eph. v. 5); as, on the other hand, where the righteous God is not served and obeyed, men easily come to disregard the rights of person or property.

Obs. 3. This reproof is the more striking as being delivered shortly before Uzziah's death, which took place in a jubile year. (Cp. on vi. 1.)

till there be...] Rather, *till there is no* **room, and ye are made to dwell** *alone* **within** *the* **land.** They acted as if they, and they only, had a title to the land; all else being mere bondmen or vagrants (cp. Job xxii. 8): nay, and as if God Himself no longer "dwelt" in the land (Ezek. viii. 12, ix. 9).

Obs. 1. It is difficult to see how Uzziah could have had his "much cattle both in the low country (*Shefelah*) and in the plain (*Mishor*), husbandmen also and vine-dressers in the mountains and in Carmel" (2 Chro. xxvi. 10), consistently with the law of property.

Obs. 2. Ewald ('Hist. of Isr.' IV. 147) says of Judah in the reign of Uzziah, "The desire for the profits of trade, and the undisturbed enjoyment of the greatest possible wealth, had seized on every class with overpowering strength...Many complaints were made of injustice on the part of the judges, and of the oppression of the helpless (Amos iii. 1 ff., vi. 1; Hos. v. 10)." Cp. above, i. 17, 23, iii. 14.

9. *In mine ears*] Or, "In my hearing" (Ezek. ix. 5, x. 13). This rendering (taking the words to be Isaiah's) is favoured by xxii. 14 (where the ellipsis is supplied). The marginal rendering has xxxvii. 28, James v. 4 in its favour.

It was now revealed to him simply as a *word*. In vi. 11 the same sentence is communicated to him formally in a vision.

desolate] Lit. "a desolation" (*s.w.a.* xxiv. 12; Deut. xxviii. 37; 2 Chro. xxix. 8).

great and fair] Including the greatest and fairest of all, 1 K. ix. 7, 8. Even that was left "without inhabitant,"—ἔρημος (Matt. xxiii. 38), cp. Lev. xxvi. 31; Jer. xxii. 5.

10. The desolation here spoken of looks as if it were caused, not by the devastation of an enemy, but by the direct action of God's curse (Lev. xxvi. 20: cp. ch. xxiv. 7; Joel i. 10—12).

ten acres of vineyard] The acre (as much as a man could plough with a yoke of oxen in one day) was, probably, like the Roman "jugerum," about ⅔ of an English acre or 3200 sq. yds. Ten jugera therefore, might, at a low estimate, be expected to produce not less than 32,000 pints of wine, or 500 baths. (See Note D.) Instead of which it produced but one.

the seed of an homer] Seed sufficient to fill a homer, which was ten ephahs (Ezek. xlv. 11, 13), or ten bushels: enough seed for ten jugera. If the harvest-produce were fifty-fold the seed sown, the homer-full would have yielded 500 ephahs. It produced but one ephah; the amount of Ruth's *gleanings* in one day (Ruth ii. 17).

Obs. As applied to the nation, the ratio of the ephah to the homer reappears in vi. 13. "Yet in it shall be *a tenth*, and it shall return."

11—17. The radical cause of the national guilt is here assigned, though only one of its outward manifestations is mentioned. They "*regarded not the work of the Lord;*" that "glorious" and "perfect work" (Ps. cxi. 3; Deut. xxxii. 4), which He had done in Israel's national history (cp. Ps. xcii. 4—6). They did not care for a "work" that was so long in coming to its completion (cp. *v.* 19); —why should they, when the present prosperity of the kingdom was all they could wish? It was the old spirit of rebellion in an advanced stage:—'Better the earthly happiness of our actual condition, than this ever-retreating vision of God's Kingdom.' (Num. xvi. 13, 14.)

So they surrendered themselves blindly to the pursuit of physical enjoyment (xxviii. 7).

follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine ‖inflame them!
‖ Or, *pursue them.*

12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 ¶ Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because *they have* no knowledge: and † their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.
† Heb. *their glory are men of famine.*

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15 And [d] the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:
[d] chap. 2. 9, 11, 17.

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and ‖† God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.
‖ Or, *the holy God.* † Heb. *the God the holy.*

Obs. 1. The outward intoxication did but symbolize the inward. It was above all the intoxication of *pride* (xxviii. 3) that swayed them (xxviii. 7, xxix. 9: cp. lvi. 12; Joel i. 5).

Obs. 2. From Micah ii. 11 it would seem that the unfaithful prophets urged on, instead of checking, the national malady; intoxicating the people with lying hopes which rested on their own puerile conceits: the "wine" of the Mishna, the "spiced drink" of the Gemara.

Obs. 3. The sins reproved in *vv.* 8—10 and 11—17 are joined together in Matt. xxiii. 25, ἁρπαγῆς καὶ ἀκρασίας. Cp. Prov. xxxi. 4—8.

11. *rise up early*] As the unbelieving people had done at Horeb (Exod. xxxii. 6).

follow strong drink] Lit. "pursue" it: i. 23; Hos. xii. 1 (2): instead of "pursuing to know the Lord" (Hos. vi. 3).

continue until night] Or, **linger on** (Prov. xxiii. 30) **in the twilight**; through the twilight into "the black and dark night" (Prov. vii. 9).

12. The instruments of music, which of old were used by the prophets to celebrate God's praises (all the four words are used in 1 S. x. 5), are now monopolized by their festivities. Cp. Job xxi. 12, Amos vi. 5, 6.

they regard not] Or, "look not towards:" frequently used of casting one's looks expectantly towards *an object of trust*; as in xxii. 8, 11; Num. xxi. 9 (cp. Zech. xii. 10); Ps. xxxiv. 6; Jonah ii. 5 (and similarly the noun in xx. 5, 6).

work...operation...] Ps. lxiv. 9 (10).—And therefore He must *compel* them, by strange methods, to understand it; x. 12, xxviii. 21; Heb. i. 5;—by famine and captivity, *v.* 13.

13. *Therefore*]—because of their want of consideration.

my people] Still His (iii. 12): but on that very account to be punished, Amos iii. 2.

because they have no knowledge] Or, "for lack of knowledge" (Hos. iv. 6) (so LXX., Targ., Vulg., Vitr., Knob.), cp. Luke xix. 42—44. Others, "without knowing it," or, "unawares" (Rosenm., Drechsl., Ew., Del.). Cp. xlii. 25; Luke xxi. 34.

famished...thirst] Cp. iii. 1 f.

their multitude] See Note B.

Obs. The words used by Phinehas's wife, when she heard that the Ark was taken, "*The glory is departed* from Israel," are the words here rendered by "*honourable men*" and "*gone into captivity*." From that Philistine captivity, caused by the iniquity of the priesthood, the Ark of God was recovered; and was brought up by David to Zion with psalms celebrating the triumph of the "King of Glory." So too, after the proclamation of banishment pronounced on David's house in this chapter, the Glory of the Holy One is proclaimed more distinctly than ever in ch. vi.

14. *enlarged herself*] Better (as in Hab. ii. *s. w.*), *enlarged* **her desire**.

without measure] Or, **limit**: as though the divine decree respecting her power, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further," had been withdrawn.

their pomp] Rather (as in xxiv. 8, *s. w.*), *their* **noise**;—the unceasing roll of sound which came from that busy crowd.

he that rejoiceth] Nearly the same word as in xiii. 3, xxii. 2, xxiii. 7, xxiv. 8, xxxii. 13.

shall descend] They had sinned like Korah and his companions: their punishment shall be no less signal (Num. xvi. 30—33).

into it] This should be connected with "rejoiceth;" the verb "descend" being used absolutely, as in Ezek. xxx. 6:—*and* **her** (the nation's) *glory, and* **her** *multitude, and* **her noise**, *and he that rejoiceth* **in her**, *shall descend*;—descend from that height of exultation into the silence of Hades. Cp. xiv. 11.

Obs. This insatiable greed of Hades was the reflex of their own lust of earthly good. Cp. Prov. xxvii. 20; "Hell and destruction cannot be satisfied; and the eyes of man cannot be satisfied."

15. *And the mean man...*] The words of the first half-verse are the same that were used in ii. 9. Render: **So man is bowed down**, *and the great man* **is brought low.**

16. *in judgment*] In that hour of righteous retribution His absolute supremacy and holi-

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

19 That say, Let him make speed, *and* hasten his work, that we may see

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ness (cp. vi. 1—4) shall stand out clearly to view.

shall be sanctified] Manifested to be holy, and so regarded with godly reverence (Lev. x. 3).

Obs. When Moses and Aaron were excluded from the Land of Canaan, God "was sanctified in them" (Num. xx. 13). So He would be sanctified in exiled Israel, Ezek. xx. 41.

17. When this judgment fell, was "the congregation of the Lord to be as sheep that had no shepherd"? (Num. xxvii. 17.) Not so. The pastures that had supplied food to the "fat ones,"—to those who had "nourished their hearts as in a day of slaughter" (James v. 5),—would be laid waste. Nomads should occupy them. But, while Israel's outward privileges were withdrawn, the "lambs" of the flock should be provided for;—they "*should feed after their manner*," lit. "*according to their grazing*." The "meek should eat, and be satisfied" (Ps. xxii. 26), because "the Lord was their shepherd" (Ps. xxiii. 1; ch. xl. 11).

That this is the correct view of the verse is proved by a comparison of Zeph. iii. 11—13 (which plainly looks back to Isaiah); "I will remove from within thee *them that rejoice in thy highness* (ch. xiii. 3), and thou shalt no more be haughty on my holy mountain. And I will leave within thee a *lowly and poor people:* and they shall trust in the name of the Lord (xiv. 32): *and they shall feed* and lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

Obs. 1. As "strangers" (or "sojourners") would occupy the land, so Gentiles would succeed to the spiritual inheritance. (Matt. xxi. 41—43.)

Obs. 2. The words rendered "stranger" and "lamb" occur in xi. 6; "the wolf shall dwell (sojourn) with the lamb."

18, 19. Bold, defiant, infidelity is now depicted; openly refusing to "walk in the light of the Lord," or to abide under His protection. This was the crowning act of impiety, which brought on the judicial sentence of ch. vi.

18. *that draw...*] Not content with the ordinary progress of iniquity, they spin ungodly theories, by which to make their massive loads of sin move more readily through the land.

cords of vanity] Such theories were really vain (xxviii. 14, 15)—*idola* of the imagination;—yet with them "the men of vanity" (Ps. xxvi. 4) seduced worldly minds to sin.

as with a cart rope] As if they had yoked themselves, like bullocks, to drag onward their piles of ungodliness.

19. *Let him make speed...hasten*] *s. w. a.* in viii. 3 (*maher...hash...*).

The omission of the Divine Name indicates the scoffing tone of the remark (cp. 2 Pet. iii. 4). The title "Holy One of Israel" in the second clause is taken from the prophet's own words (cp. i. 4, v. 24, xxx. 10, 11).

They employ the language of piety (cp. Ps. lxxi. 12), as if they *desired* "the day of the Lord" (Amos v. 18—20); as if they felt secure of a high place in Messiah's Kingdom. But their challenge really meant:—"Isaiah is constantly telling us of a great work that God is carrying on among us in pursuance of a mysterious plan. We can see no traces of it. From the time of the Exodus to David, from David to our own day, our whole national history seems obscure. King Uzziah's policy we do understand. It has given us peace, and reputation abroad; internal prosperity, and good incomes, and freedom from those old religious scruples. All this has followed laws of causation that are tolerably plain. But the prophet's views are very lofty and transcendental; they are high above out of our sight. Oh that the 'Counsel' he preaches so much about would move with somewhat accelerated speed, that we may have an opportunity of *seeing* it. Oh that some one would mount up to heaven or go across the seas (Deut. xxx. 12, 13), and *bring it near* to us, that we might *know* it,—and judge of it."

Obs. 1. An immediate answer to this taunt is given in plain language in *vv.* 24—30. Their request shall be granted:—God will muster His armies "from afar," and "behold, they shall come *with speed* (meherah) swiftly." A further answer is supplied by the vision of the Holy One in the next chapter;—He assuredly will make His glory fill the earth, though the despisers will be too blind to see it, too hard-hearted to believe it.

Other replies are given later on.

(1) The naming of Isaiah's second son "Speed-plunder Haste-spoil" (viii. 3), afforded an immediate evidence of God's actual working among them.

(2) In xlvi. 12, 13, it is pointed out that the fault of God's seeming *distance* from Israel was in themselves, because they were "far from righteousness:" and it is added; "I *will bring near* my righteousness; it shall not be far off; and my salvation *shall not tarry*."

it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know *it!*

† Heb. *that say concerning evil,* It is *good, &c.*

20 ¶ Woe unto them †that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

[e] Prov. 3. 7. Rom. 12. 16.

21 Woe unto *them that are* [e] wise in their own eyes, and prudent †in their own sight!

† Heb. *before their face.*

22 Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23 Which [f] justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

[f] Prov. 17. 15.

† Heb. *the tongue of fire.*

24 Therefore as †the fire devoureth

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(3) The faithful are warned against impatience in xxviii. 16; "I lay in Zion...a sure foundation; he that believeth *shall not make haste* (*s. w.*):" and are encouraged not to yield to it, xxxii. 4: "The heart of the rash (hasty) shall understand knowledge;" xxxv. 4: "Say to them that are *hasty*, Be strong; fear not; behold your God will come."

(4) In due time all shall be fulfilled; lx. 22: "*The* LORD *will hasten it in its time.*"

Obs. 2. Compare also Zeph. i. 12—16 ("The great day of the Lord is near; it is near and *hasteth greatly*," *v.* 14).

20. *call evil good*] It is an "*evil* and a bitter thing *to forsake the Lord*" (Jer. ii. 19); they called it good. It is "good to be near to God" (Ps. lxxiii. 28); they "removed their heart far from Him" (ch. xxix. 13).

put darkness for light] Infidel theories, which allowed them to "walk on still in darkness" (Ps. lxxxii. 5), were to them "enlightened" views. The light of divine truth, revealing as it did the darkness of man's fallen state (Eph. v. 8—14), was to them "even as the shadow of death" (Job xxiv. 17).

bitter for sweet] They swallowed sin, that bitter thing (Jer. ii. 19, iv. 18; cp. Num. v. 19—24), as sweet (Prov. ix. 17); they disrelished what was "sweeter than honey" (Ps. xix. 10).

Obs. 1. Thus they counterworked the plan of Divine Wisdom, which was ever bringing good out of evil (Jer. xxix. 10, 11), illumining the darkness (Gen. i. 2, 3; Ps. xviii. 28; ch. ix. 1), turning the bitterness into sweetness (Exod. xv. 25).

Obs. 2. Prov. xxvii. 7 gives the rationale of their condition: "The full soul loatheth a honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." (Cp. Matt. v. 6.)

21. *wise in their own eyes*] Prov. iii. 7 (*s. w.*); cp. ch. xxix. 14, 15; Prov. xxvi. 12; Gen. iii. 6, (Matt. xi. 25; Rom. xii. 16.)

prudent in their own sight] Lit. "before their own face." For, "there is no fear of God *before their eyes*" (Ps. xxxvi. 1). They are their own oracle. They walk "in the stubbornness of their own heart" (Deut. xxix. 19); worshipping their own successful policy. (Cp. iii. 3, x. 13, xxix. 14; Jer. iv. 22.)

22. *mighty to drink wine*] That was their only heroism, gigantic sensuality. In defence of right (i. 23), they were very cowards; unable to stand against the temptation of a bribe.

Obs. Their untaxed strength might have dispensed with the wine altogether. "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to the bitter of soul" (Prov. xxxi. 6; cp. 2 S. xvii. 8).

men of strength] Rather, *of* valour.

to mingle strong drink] Mixing it with spices to increase its heat.

Obs. They forget that they are thus filling up a cup of wrath, which will leave them "battered" (xxviii. 1), "swallowed up" (ib. *v.* 7), "staggering" (xxix. 9), "prostrate" (li. 17—23).

23. The connexion between *vv.* 22, 23 is given by Prov. xxxi. 4—9.

justify the wicked] Cp. Exod. xxiii. 7; Deut. xxv. 1; 1 K. viii. 32.

for reward] For a bribe (cp. on i. 23). Vitringa notices that the Targ. here has, "*the mammon of falsehood;*" cp. Luke xvi. 9—11.

24. *as the fire*] Lit. "the tongue of fire;"—licking up the "stubble," as a cow does grass (Num. xxii. 4). Cp. Num. xvi. 35; 1 K. xviii. 38; ch. xlvii. 14; Amos ii. 5.

Obs. 1. The "tongue of fire" was in retribution of "the deceitful tongue" (Ps. cxx. 3, 4). Cp. xxxiii. 11.

Obs. 2. This is the only place in the Old Testament where the expression "tongue of fire" occurs. Interpreted in accordance with Jer. v. 14, "*I will make my words in thy mouth fire*, and this people wood, and it shall *devour them*" (cp. Jer. xxiii. 29), its reference must be to the prophetic message communicated by Isaiah. (Cp. xl. 6—8.)

Obs. 3. In ch. vi Isaiah is consecrated to his apostleship by a seraph (or "burning one") taking "a live coal" from the heavenly altar, and touching his lips.

Obs. 4. So when the Twelve Apostles were consecrated to their office, "tongues as of fire" rested on each; symbolizing the "spirit of burning" (iv. 4), by which Zion was to be purified.

the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, *so* their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

25 Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcases *were* ‖torn in the midst of the streets. ℰFor all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

‖ Or, *as dung.*
ℰ chap. 9. 12, 17, 21. & 10. 4.

26 ¶ And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss

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and the flame] Rather, *and* **dry grass sinks down in** *flame*. Knobel says: "The stubble in a field was burnt to make manure (Virg. 'G.' I. 84; Plin. 'H. N.' XVIII. 72); and similarly the old withered grass in pastures was burnt *to enrich the aftergrowth* (Pallad. IX. 4; Lucan IX. 182)." Cp. Heb. vi. 8.

root...blossom] So that they should suffer as severely as the Amorite before them had done; Amos ii. 9. Cp. Mal. iv. 1.

their root shall be as rottenness] Perishing by internal decay. The root is that of the vines of *vv.* 1—7.

Of Ephraim Hosea (ix. 16, cp. x. 1) had already said: "Ephraim is smitten; *their root* is dried up; they shall bear no fruit." *Their* root was turned into "gall and wormwood" (Deut. xxix. 18), almost from the beginning, by Jeroboam's 'prudential' sin.

With Judah the case was different. Though the royalty that had its root in David should go to decay, yet "the remnant of Judah should again" (in a far deeper sense than it did under Hezekiah) "take root downward and bear fruit upward" (xxxvii. 31). See xxvii. 6.

their blossom shall go up as dust] Rather, **come up**. In Gen. xl. 10 the same verb is used of the vine-blossoms "shooting forth" (E.V.). Their blossom shall produce no real "fruit," but shall turn into "powder" (Deut. xxviii. 24 *s.w.*); like that of the "apples of Sodom" (on which see Dr Tristram, 'B. N. H.' p. 482).

have cast away] Or, **rejected**;—rebelliously and with contempt; *s. w. a.* viii. 6 ("refuseth"), xxx. 12 ("despise"): Lev. xxvi. 15, 43; Num. xi. 20; 1 S. viii. 7, x. 19, xv. 23, 26; Hos. iv. 6; Amos ii. 4. (Cp. ch. xxx. 9.)

despised] *s. w. a.* i. 4.

word] A less usual term than that in ii. 3. It occurs in Deut. xxxii. 2; "*my speech shall distil as the dew.*" That fertilizing dew they had scorned; therefore it was to be withdrawn from them. Then they would wither away. (Cp. Hos. xiv. 5.)

25. *his hand*] That mighty hand, which had rescued them from Egypt (Deut. iii. 24), planted them in Canaan (Ps. xliv. 3), and protected them there (1 K. viii. 42), was now stretched over them to *smite* (i. 5); as of old it had been over Egypt (Exod. iii. 20).

the hills] Or, **mountains**. Cp. ii. 14, 19. The Davidic throne (cp. Ps. xxx. 7), and the temple-mountain (more glorious than Hermon, Ps. lxviii. 15, 16), were shaken as by an earthquake.

their carcases were torn] Rather, *were* **as refuse** (or, "sweepings"). Cp. Lam. iii. 45. When that terrible earthquake shook Zion, her "sons...lay at the head of all the streets" (li. 20). Cp. Jer. vii. 33, xiv. 16.

For all this] Though the blow has been so heavy. The phrase sounds like an echo of Lev. xxvi. 18, 23, 27.

not turned away] Because (ix. 12, 13) they "returned not to Him who smote them."

26. In ch. i the prophet had spoken of the land as laid waste by "strangers." The invading army is here described a little more closely. To those who first heard the description, it would sound like a reiteration of Joel's prophecy of the "Northern Army" (ii. 20);—and would turn their thoughts to that great power, which about thirteen years before Uzziah's death (B.C. 771) had laid Samaria under tribute.

But nowhere is the Assyrian spoken of as destined to be the instrument of Judah's overthrow. All that is now said is that God's instrument should come from afar.

an ensign] Or, **standard** (as A.V. at xlix. 22, lxii. 10):—*s. w. a.* xi. 10, 12, xiii. 2, xviii. 3, xxx. 17, xxxi. 9, xxxiii. 23 (E.V. "sail").

The "standard" was to mark the place of rendezvous.

Obs. Of old the Lord had been Himself a "standard" for His people to fight under; Exod. xvii. 15. Now that they had deserted Him, the "standard" should be "lifted up" to draw the nations to fight His battles.

the nations from far] Or, "afar off;" *s. w. a.* xlix. 1; Deut. xxviii. 49. Cp. xxxix. 3.

hiss unto them] Lit. "unto *him*;"—as if they were one compact mass; moving all together like a swarm of bees (cp. vii. 18).

with speed swiftly] The words used by Joel (iii. 4, H. iv. 4), where God Himself says:—"swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense on your own head." (Cp.

unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:

27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken:

28 Whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind:

29 Their roaring *shall be* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions: yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry *it* away safe, and none shall deliver *it*.

30 And in that day they shall roar

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on *v.* 19.) The invading host is God's instrument of retribution.

Obs. There is much besides in these verses, which seems designed to leave a similar impression. Indeed after the words "None is weary or stumbling in him," everything might be applied to Him, who has set up the "standard;" the "Captain of the Lord's host." All the verbs and pronouns are in the singular; and we have the following remarkable expressions:

(1) "He neither slumbereth nor sleepeth;" cp. Ps. cxxi. 4.

(2) "Whose arrows are sharp;" elsewhere twice of God; Ps. xlv. 5, cxx. 4 (cp. Deut. xxxii. 23, 42).

(3) His bows are already "bent;" cp. Ps. vii. 12.

(4) His chariot-wheels are "as a whirlwind;" cp. Nah. i. 3; Ps. lxxxiii. 15.

(5) The description in *v.* 29 is plainly parallel to Hos. v. 14: "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear, and go away; I will carry off, and none shall rescue;" Hos. xi. 10: "He shall roar like a lion." Cp. Hos. xiii. 7, 8; Amos iii. 8; Joel iii. 16.

For the expression, "none can rescue," see Deut. xxxii. 39 (*quoted* in ch. xliii. 13); and Ps. l. 22: "lest I tear, and none can rescue."

(6) In *v.* 30 the language passes over into that of the description of the "Day of the Lord" in Amos v. 18—20.

So the mysterious Host advances as God's own Minister of Vengeance.

27. *None shall be weary*] For they are upheld by the strength of "the Creator of the ends of the earth...who gives strength to the weary" (xl. 27—31).

the girdle of their loins] They have been girt, like Cyrus in xlv. 5, by the hand of divine justice; by Him, of whom it is said (xi. 5), "Righteousness shall be *the girdle of His reins*," (same words as here).

29. *Their roaring*] Rather, "His **roar** is like a lion's." The lion roars on coming near his prey, to terrify it; and then, when preparing for his spring, utters a deep, solemn growl; which is referred to in the third clause: "He shall growl and seize the prey."

and shall carry it away safe] Or, "he shall take alive." This is a singular expression; which almost compels us to think of God Himself as the real Invader. (Cp. especially xxxi. 4—6.) The verb means to "liberate" from danger, to "cause to escape." See the noun in iv. 2. (Cp. the ζωγρέω of Luke v. 10; 2 Tim. ii. 26.)

Obs. 1. It was a remarkable characteristic of Nebuchadnezzar's dealing with Jerusalem (in 589) that he united inflexible severity to the city which he burnt with mercy to all who went out to him. See Jer. xxi. 3—10; xxxviii. 2, 17. The obstinacy of the people compelled him to destroy the city. But the conqueror's severity was (in God's purposes, Jer. xxix. 11) the means of rescuing the nation from the utter moral perdition which threatened it. Nebuchadnezzar was but as a lion who carried off the "daughter of Zion" from her worst enemies.

Nor was it otherwise in the Roman captivity. Titus was willing (even desirous) to spare the city, if only its inmates would surrender. They would not:—and thereby they compelled him to carry off the whole people. The entire destruction of the temple and the deportation of the Jews were the providential means of securing the free growth of the Christian Church—the Church of the σωζόμενοι (Acts ii. 47)—symbolized historically by the body of refugees who escaped out of Jerusalem to Pella at the beginning of the war.

Obs. 2. In Jer. xxi. 5, God's own words are: "*I myself* will fight against you *with outstretched arm*." Cp. *v.* 25 above; and ch. xxix. 1—7.

and none shall deliver it] Or, "rescue" (as A.V. in Hos. v. 14). No wolf-like foe may (by reversing the national calamity) *rescue* them out of the hands of Omnipotent Justice,—to complete their ruin.

30. *And...they shall roar*] Or, "And he shall growl over him, as when the sea growleth;" with the deep, strong sound, as of half-subdued anger, which rises from the sea in a storm.

The Destroyer is next seen, not as the lion from the forest, but as the Deluge sent to cleanse the corrupted land.

against them like the roaring of the sea: and if *one* look unto the land, behold darkness *and* ‖sorrow, ‖and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

‖ Or, *distress.*
‖ Or, *when it is light, it shall be dark in the destructions thereof.*

Obs. There is the same transition in Jer. iv. 7 and 23—26.

The remainder of the verse is divided by the Hebrew accents into *three* clauses: which may be rendered thus: **And one shall look unto the earth**, *and behold*, *darkness;* **even the light is an adversary** (or, is anguish); **dark is it amidst the clouds** *thereof.* Each clause is weighty.

(1) "One shall look unto the earth;" —nearly as in viii. 22. The verb is the one commented on above, at *v.* 12. Even in the extremity of their "fiery trial," they would not look to their God; they would look only to expedients of worldly policy. They were bitten by the fiery serpent; but refused to "look unto" their God "and be saved" (Num. xxi. 9; Ps. xxxiv. 5; ch. xlv. 22).

Obs. 1. In Num. xxi. 8, 9, the pole, on which the brazen serpent was placed, is called "*the standard*" (*s. qu. a.* in *v.* 26 above). That standard, which represented God's inflexible justice turned by His mercy into a means of health to the penitent, had begun to be lifted up to the nations by God's dealings with Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah; as it afterwards was displayed to Nebuchadnezzar on his repentance at Babylon. But Israel would not turn toward it for cure.

Obs. 2. They did, indeed, honour that display of mercy outwardly; but *in the very act of doing so* they shewed their alienation of heart (cp. xxix. 13); for down to the time of Hezekiah they "*burnt incense to it*" (2 K. xviii. 4). Cp. on vi. 2.

(2) "Even the light is an adversary:" Lit. "an adversary—even the light;" or, "and that the light" (cp. Amos iii. 11). The health-giving light of God's countenance (ii. 5) having been withdrawn, all is "darkness" (cp. Amos v. 18—20); darkness only made more terrible by the flashings of those "tongues of fire" (*v.* 24), the hostile, anguish-inflicting, lightnings of the prophetic Word.

Obs. 1. So in x. 17, "the light of Israel shall be for a fire."

Obs. 2. The word for "adversary" is the one used in Lam. i. 10, iv. 12. In Lam. ii. 4, it is applied to God Himself: "He bent His bow like an enemy; He stood with His right hand *as an adversary...;* He poured out His fury like fire." In 1 S. ii. 32 it is used in reference to the desolation of the Tabernacle at Shiloh. (See on lix. 19, lxiii. 9, and cp. Job xv. 24.)

Obs. 3. Especially to be noted is Amos iii. 11 (following, "the lion hath roared," *v.* 8). For there we have the same unusual construction as here: "An adversary—even round about thy land." He who would ever have been as "a wall of fire round about them" Zech. ii. 5 (H. ii. 9) against their enemies, was now Himself their adversary.

(3) "Dark is it amidst the clouds thereof;" the clouds, which had dropped fatness over the land (cp. the verb in Deut. xxxii. 2), were now black with the rain of "fire and sulphur" (Gen. xix. 24; ch. i. 9).

Obs. In Micah iii. 6 this darkness is brought on by the false prophets. Their falsehoods —emanations from the powers of darkness— shut out the light of heaven. The desolation of the land was but a penal consequence of *that* darkness. The "children of the kingdom" were "cast forth into outer darkness" (Matt. viii. 11) because they "rebelled against the light" (Job xxiv. 13). See Jer. xiii. 16, 17.

The chapter ends in unrelieved gloom; like chs. iii and viii. But as each of those is followed by bright visions, so this too. When the deluge arrives, an Ark of Safety is prepared for the faithful (cp. on xxvi. 20). The true Israel may say, "The darkness shall be light about me" (Ps. cxxxix. 11, 12, xviii. 28; cp. Exod. xiv. 20). The vineyard is laid waste; but "God's glory fills the whole earth" (vi. 4).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 1.)

The term ידידיה (identical with the name given by God to the child, whom his father called Solomon, 2 S. xii. 25) occurs in Deut. xxxiii. 12;—where the same is asserted of him as, in Ps. xvi. 9, is said by the Holy One respecting his own flesh, יִשְׁכֹּן לָבֶטַח. The Only-Begotten could affirm that His flesh, the True Tabernacle which God builded, should "*rest securely.*"

In Jer. xi. 15, we have the same word as here, ידידי (cp. xii. 7, ידדות נפשי), used in connexion with God's "House." "What has My Well-beloved to do in My house?" A passage capable of two interpretations: (1) "What has My covenant people to do any longer in My Home?" (2) "What has My covenant-Presence, My Shekinah, any longer to do in—what I have so long called—My House?" The latter view perhaps har-

monizes better with xii. 7, where it is said, "*I have forsaken* My house,"—that house, which was "the beloved of His soul" so long as it was the abode of the ידיד;—and it also agrees with the use of the word in Isaiah; where ידידי is the "one Son, His well-beloved," of Mark xii. 6,—the "Heir" of the vineyard.

The only other place where ידיד occurs in the singular is in Ps. cxxvii (which has לשלמה in the title). Ps. cxxvii contrasts the busy toil and anxious care of human builders and watchers with the sleep granted by God to "His well-beloved." Their schemes had "*All in vain*" written on them;—as by Nebuchadnezzar's burning of the ark and temple, when the ידיד seemed to retire to rest (cp. ch. xviii. 4; Ps. xliv. 23); and more completely, by the "rending of the vail of the temple,"—a visible *μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν*—when the "well-beloved" fell asleep in His Father's arms (Luke xxiii. 46), and on awaking was saluted with the eternal decree, "Thou art My Son...ask of Me and I will give Thee nations for Thine inheritance:"—"Lo an inheritance from the Lord, sons" innumerable;—"builded together for a Holy Temple in the Lord."

The plural ידידים occurs in Ps. lx (cp. cviii), which is connected by its title (שושן) with Ps. xlv, the epitome of the Song of Solomon. Ps. xlv has ידידות in its title, while in its last line it proclaims the King, whom it celebrates, to be the Shilôh;—for its עמים יהודוך combines the יודוך אחיך of Gen. xlix. 8 with the לו יקהת עמים of *v.* 10.

The only other place where "*Yedid*" occurs is in Ps. lxxxiv. 1; "How *lovely* are *Thy tabernacles*, O Lord of Hosts;" lovely, because in them was to be found "the living God" (*v.* 2); who, "looking upon the face of His Anointed" (*v.* 10), "gave grace and glory" (*v.* 12) to all who "trusted in Him."

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 1.)

The "Baal-Hamon" of Song of Sol. viii. 11 seems formed in the mould of "Baal-Hermon" (1 Chro. v. 23), the name of one of the highest peaks of Anti-Libanus. "Hermon" typified the might of the Gentile world (cp. Ps. lxviii. 15; Song of Sol. iv. 8); and Baal-Hamon was well suited to stand as its antithesis;—to represent the Holy Land, or City, as the destined Head of the nations (cp. ii. 2—4). For "*hamon*" is the word used in the history of the "everlasting Covenant" made with Abraham, when God said to him; "I,—behold, My covenant is with thee: and thou shalt become a multitude (*hamon*) of nations...Abraham shall thy name be, for the father of a multitude (*hamon*) of nations have I made thee;" Gen. xvii. 4, 5.

The "vineyard of the Lord of Hosts" was planted within the range of the Abrahamic covenant. In that vineyard was one special vine, Judah,—"His sanctuary" (Ps. cxiv. 2; cp. lxxvi. 1, 2). When David was anointed king over Israel, the whole vineyard region became "Keren-ben-Shemen," "Horn of the *Son-of-oil*," or "of the Anointed:"—for in Zech. iv. 14 "the two anointed ones" are lit. "two sons of oil" (יצהר). The Davidic covenant, by which the fulfilment of the immutable promise to Abraham was limited to a son of David, is alluded to by David himself as "the mountain which God had made so strong" (Ps. xxx. 7). Solomon, anointed with the oil of the sanctuary; the builder of the temple; the peaceful ruler of the land from Egypt to the Euphrates, from Elath to Hamath; famed far and wide for justice and wisdom; might well have seemed about to inaugurate the period of "blessing to all nations."

But he fell away into sensuality, and left only a bright vision of a future King (Ps. lxxii) for the comfort of the faithful. Instead of drawing the nations to become "children of Abraham," he descended from the height of his own privilege to be merely the ruler of an "empire." Under him "*hamon*" was applicable to Israel and Judah in a different sense;—"a noisy crowd,"—a throng of votaries of pleasure, or of *mammon* (referred by some to the same root). Cp. Ezek. v. 7, vii. 11—14.

So in ch. v. 13, 14 the *hamon* of Judah is either its "noisy crowd," or its "wealth." Zion has become like Babel, and must suffer the same punishment (cp. xiv. 11 המית). —Their fountain of holy oil is corrupted, מְשִׁחָתָם; cp. Prov. xxv. 26 and Exod. xl. 15.

Only when the Christ, "the true Vine," shall have been planted in the earth, can the promise to David, or the oath to Abraham, be realized. In Him—the King and King's Son (Ps. lxxii. 1)—the Vineyard shall be extended "from sea to sea" (ib. 8), and all nations shall be filled with benediction (ib. 17).

NOTE C. (ON *v.* 2.)

The remarkable נטע כרם of Prov. xxxi. 16 claims here a few words.

I. The "field" and "vineyard" of *v.* 16 are connected by the עצלות of *v.* 27, with the "*field* of the עצל, and *vineyard* of the man void of understanding" in xxiv. 30—34.

Obs. 1. Of this last it is said: "*The stone wall* thereof was broken down" (*v.* 31). Cp. Isai. v. 5.

Obs. 2. In xxiv. 20, we read: "The lamp (נר) of the wicked shall be put out:" but in xxxi. 18, "her lamp (נרה) is not extinguished *in the night.*" The "lamp of David" (ניר, 1 K. xi. 36) was put out by his children's sin (after long flickering) at the captivity; and "the lamp" in God's temple (Exod. xxvii. 20) was also extinguished. Yet in that dark night "the true Light" still shone (Ps. xviii. 28, cxxxii. 17, נר). Cp. Isai. iv. 5, "a flaming fire *by night.*"

Obs. 3. Solomon's vineyard was ruined, because its watchers said: "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber" (Prov. xxiv. 33; cp. vi. 9). But Israel's true Guardian "slept not, nor slumbered" (Ps. cxxi. 3; ch. xxvii. 3. Cp. on *v.* 27, above).

II. The טרף and חק of Prov. xxxi. 15, given "while it is yet night," are connected by the Halleluyah Psalm cxi with the Paschal Feast; the memorial of God's bringing His vine out of Egypt: see Ps. cxi. 5; Exod. xii. 42, 43. (Cp. Gen. xlix. 8—11.)

III. A comparison of Prov. xxxi. 31, ויהללוה מעשיה, with Ps. ciii. 22, cxlv. 10, cxi. 7, suggests that as in Prov. viii. 9 we have a representation of Divine Wisdom, which pointed to Him "in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3, 1 Cor. i. 24), so in Prov. xxxi. 10 f. we have an allegorical delineation of "the prime part of wisdom" (Prov. ix. 10), "the fear of the Lord," which was never perfectly realized except in Christ. Cp. Isai. xi. 2, 3, Heb. v. 7.

NOTE D. (ON *v.* 10.)

An account of the Hampton-Court vine states, that at a time when it covered 1700 sq. ft. it bore 2240 bunches of grapes, averaging a pound in weight. This would give nearly 12 lbs. of grapes to a square yard.

In the 'Guardian' of April 1, 1874, an account is given of a vine in California, forty years old, whose clusters averaged 2¼ lbs. It covers an acre of ground (4840 sq. yds.); and its annual yield of grapes is from 10,000 to 12,000 lbs.:—as nearly as may be, an average of 2¼ lbs. of grapes to a square yard.

One pint of wine, therefore, to a square yard would be a very low rate.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Isaiah, in a vision of the Lord in his glory,* 5 *being terrified, is confirmed for his message.* 9 *He sheweth the obstinacy of the people unto their desolation.* 13 *A remnant shall be saved.*

IN the year that king Uzziah died I [a]saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and [b]his train filled the temple.

[a] John 12. 41.
[b] Or, *the skirts thereof.*

CHAP. VI. The fifth chapter ended in deepest gloom: the light of prophecy only making the darkness more fearful. Before long the tower that God Himself had built in His vineyard (v. 2) would be brought low (ii. 15), and the vineyard laid waste. Already the heir of David's throne had been "humbled" by God's stroke; "cut away" (cp. Ps. lxxxviii. 5), as a withered branch; excluded from the house of the Lord; and continuing till death "unhealed of his plague."

The prophet had delivered his message, as only one who was supported by God's Spirit could have done. But he was still man; still conscious how unworthy he was to stand before the Holy One;—must he not, at such a time, have needed special revelations of God's faithfulness? Even Moses, after being assured of God's gracious presence with Israel in spite of its sin, begged to be shewn God's "glory" (Exod. xxxiii. 18);—the glory of Him, who threatened to destroy the sinful nation "as in a moment," and yet remained tenderly affectioned to those who revered Him, and was ever faithful to the covenant He had made with Abraham. Must not Isaiah have felt the same longing desire? He had been sent to testify to the seeming failure of all the care and labour which had been bestowed on Israel for 700 years. He had indeed been shewn a picture of Zion's exaltation in "the latter days;" yet he may well have craved for some more immediate exhibition of that great Name—"forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will not leave (the guilty) unpunished" (Exod. xxxiv. 7). Such consolation was supplied to him in the Vision of ch. vi.

(1) He sees the Thrice Holy-One; and, though he cries out, "Woe is me, I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips," he is pardoned, purified from sin, and enabled

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And †one cried unto another, and

† Heb. *this cried to this.*

to offer himself to God with entire self-devotion.

(2) He is assured that God's glory shall fill the earth; and that the "Holy Seed" abides in Israel in spite of its banishment.

So now he can go forth to wait patiently, or to labour diligently, as God may direct.

The temple on Moriah has been polluted by the heartless services of men, who "trampled down" its courts; and is sentenced to desolation. But the Lord in His Temple is evermore adored with pure, reverential, service.

The king of Judah had profanely invaded the palace of the "Great King" (Ps. xlviii. 2), Israel's true King (1 S. xii. 12); but the unapproachable Glory remained unsullied.

The land was to be submerged by a tumultuous flood of invaders, and the heavens darkened with clouds of divine judgment; but He, who sat enthroned of old at the Flood (Ps. xxix. 10), He had provided a refuge for His people, in which all that was typically foreshadowed by the ark of Noah (xxvi. 20) should be realized. (Cp. xxxii. 2.)

Obs. 1. The relation of ch. v to ch. vi is that of Ps. lxxxviii to Ps. lxxxix. The almost unrelieved darkness, which accompanies the deluge of God's wrath (*v.* 7) in the former psalm, is in the latter succeeded by, "Thou rulest the raging of the sea;" "the heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine;" "justice and judgment are the basis of Thy throne."

Obs. 2. Much of the language of Ps. lxxxviii is exactly what might have been used by one, who (sympathetically, or actually) was bearing in his own person the sins of Israel, excommunicated for spiritual, as Uzziah was (2 Chro. xxvi. 21) for bodily, leprosy. In Ps. lxxxix we have the expression so frequent in Isaiah, "The Holy One of Israel" (*v.* 18), and the mystic name of Egypt, "Rahab," which occurs in Isai. li. 9 (cp. xxx. 7).

1. *In the year that king Uzziah died*] Cp. xiv. 28, "In the year that king Ahaz died;" that is, after his death.

Obs. 1. The year in which Uzziah died, 758 B.C., was a jubile-year; the fourteenth jubile since the occupation of Canaan, 1444 B.C. (see on ch. xxxvii, Note A). To him the jubile trumpet brought no restoration of his forfeited throne.

Obs. 2. The jubile-year began on the evening of the Day of Atonement. In *v.* 7 language is used, which reminds us of that day; as, in *v.* 13, the words "shall return" correspond to the provision made respecting the year of jubile. (See the notes.)

I saw also the Lord] Lit. "Then did I see,"—giving emphasis to the time of the vision (as in Exod. xvi. 6).

The verb for "see" is not the same as in ii. 1.—It would appear from what follows, that Isaiah's vision was ecstatic, like that granted to St Paul (Acts xxii. 17, 18);—possibly whilst, like St Paul, "he was praying in the temple."

Obs. At the end of the vision in Acts xxii the Lord said to Paul, "Depart; for I will send thee (ἐξαποστελῶ σε) unto nations afar off" (cp. Isai. xlix. 1).

The sacred Name here used is ADONAY (as in *vv.* 8, 11, iii. 17, 18, iv. 4, vii. 14, 20, etc.); the Supreme Ruler and Judge. It is the Name used in the parallel passage, Amos ix. 1 (which should be compared); in Ps. ii. 4, xxxvii. 13, etc.; Lam. ii. 1, 2, 5, 7 ("the Lord hath cast off His altar," cp. Ps. xliv. 23).

Obs. Isai. vi is the Haftarah to Exod. xviii—xx. He, who there called Israel to Himself to be His "special treasure out of all peoples" (xix. 5), said at the same time, "For all the world is Mine." They were to be "*to Him* a kingdom of priests." He, their King, is now come into His Temple as Judge; to abrogate the perishable part of the Sinaitic covenant, that the imperishable might stand forth and be established everlastingly. (Cp. on *v.* 4.)

sitting upon a throne] In ecstatic vision, the prophet sees the earthly temple transfigured until it seemed a miniature of the Universal Temple (lxvi. 1).

Every thoughtful Israelite knew well that the temple itself, no less than its rites and ministries, was allegorical. "The Heaven of Heavens could not *contain* God" (1 K. viii. 27);—it was loving condescension in Him to "look upon the things that are in heaven, and earth" (Ps. cxiii. 6);—yet it was right in them to shape their thoughts of the heavenly Temple upon the arrangements of the earthly.

So here (as seems implied especially by *v.* 4) we are to suppose the prophet to be (in vision) gazing on the actual temple which had been profaned by Uzziah; but as he gazes, how changed is its interior!—The veils have been drawn aside; and instead of the Shekinah enthroned on the cherubim, there is the King of Glory, enthroned on high, the fringes of His Royal Robe filling the Temple, so that no human priest could minister there. It is as if Sinai, with the

[b] Rev. 4. 8. said, [b]Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: [†]the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

[†] Heb. *his glory* is *the fulness of the whole earth.*

4 And the posts of the [†]door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

[†] Heb. *thresholds.*

glory of God on its summit (Exod. xxiv. 17), "like devouring fire," stood within the sanctuary.

By the eye of faith this truth had always been spiritually apprehended (cp. Ps. lxviii. 17). Here, after the overt rebellion of Uzziah, it is exhibited to the prophet in vision. The "Lord of the whole earth" (Josh. iii. 11) has now "fixed His throne for judgment." As He made Moses of old His "apostle" (Exod. iv. 13) to proclaim His judgments on Egypt and to mediate the covenant with Israel, He will now send Isaiah to proclaim His judgments on unfaithful Israel first, but also on the whole earth (xxvi. 21), that "the everlasting covenant" (lv. 3) may be established.

high and lifted up] *s. w. a.* in ii. 11, 13, 14. Cp. xxxiii. 10. The words belong not to the throne (as the LXX. gives it), but to the King Himself; see lvii. 15 (cp. ii. 11, 17, v. 16).

Obs. 1. The same two verbs are used of the "Servant of the Lord" in lii. 13;—just before the wondrous picture of His humiliation.

Obs. 2. St John, immediately before his account of the Last Passover, quotes Isai. liii. 1 and vi. 10 together; and adds, "These things said Esaias, *when he saw His glory*, and spake of Him." (John xii. 38—41. Note also *v.* 32: "I, if I be lifted up...".)

his train] The hem, or fringes, of His robe. It is the word used in Exod. xxviii. 33, 34 (xxxix. 24, 25, 26) of the flowing borders of Aaron's ephod-robe. The appearance, then, is as of a "Priest upon His throne" (Zech. vi. 13; cp. on iv. 2).

The high-priest's robes were for "glory and beauty:" typical of His, who "is clothed with majesty and honour; putting on light as a garment" (Ps. civ. 1, 2; cp. xciii. 1).

filled the temple] His robe being of light, the richly ornamented hem must be thought of as light also; and these skirts of gorgeous light were seen in the prophet's vision filling with diffusive radiance the whole Sanctuary.

This seems to imply the consecration of a new Temple of God. For when all the work of the consecration of the tabernacle by Moses was finished, "a cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and *the glory of the Lord filled* (*s. w.*) *the tabernacle*," so that "Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting" (Exod. xl. 35). And when that tabernacle had become antiquated, the same occurred at the dedication of Solomon's temple. After the priests had taken the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy of Holies, "the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house" (1 K. viii. 11). Solomon's temple was now doomed: but "the Lord remained a King for ever" (Pss. xxix. 10, xciii. 2). His glory shall "fill all the earth" (*v.* 3).

How this should be brought about, is not here revealed. Yet those former consecrations suggested *what preliminaries* would be needed: see Exod. xl. 29; 1 K. viii. 5. Nay, and did not the jubile-year, commencing on the evening of the Day of Atonement, imply the same? When "the lamp of God went out" on Zion, the whole world would be in darkness. How then was man to be restored to his lost inheritance—how could sin and death be made to surrender their prisoners—how could a full and complete Jubile-year for our race be introduced, unless an equally full and complete Day of Atonement should precede? (See on ch. liii.)

2. *Above it stood the seraphims*] Or, *Seraphim stood above* Him. In speaking on this vision, so full of things that man cannot utter (2 Cor. xii. 4), we may well "let our words be few" (Eccles. v. 2).

"Hardly do we conjecture aright" (Wisd. ix. 16) even of the visible world.

Physical science, speaking through one of her most honoured expounders (Sir John Herschel;—see Mr Proctor, 'The Sun,' p. 225), tells us that the luminous "willow-leaf-shaped" flakes on the sun's surface, which are the immediate sources of solar light and heat, must be 1000 miles long by 200 miles broad; and that "we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind."

If so vast mysteries are found to be in our sun,—one of the millions of bright particles that form the "Throne" of God,—what must we not expect, when we are allowed to contemplate (darkly, as in a reflector) Him who is "the Light of the world" (κόσμου, John viii. 12), of the spiritual Universe,—"the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. iv. 2), diffusing Righteousness as the sun diffuses light?

Reverently, then, let it be said:—

The *Seraphim*, or Fiery ones, *stood above Him*, poised as a cloud (Num. xiv. 14),—a "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. xii. 1) answering to His call, which had summoned "the heavens above, and the earth, that He might *judge His people*" (Ps. l. 4, 5; cp. ch. i. 2).

They stood *above;* not on the floor of the Temple, the earth (for "earth is His footstool,"

5 ¶ Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am †undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine

† Heb: *cut off.*

lxvi. 1), but "in the highest" (ἐν ὑψίστοις Luke ii. 14); in those regions of the sanctuary which, relatively to our earth, are above.

They are "above;" for, as the King *descended* to found the covenant on Sinai; so now, when He is about to abrogate that covenant and introduce a better, He must descend to earth, and found His Temple on earth; though still continuing to be, what before He was, "the King of Glory" (cp. John iii. 13). Everywhere, and ever, He is both the centre of all and yet in essence infinitely above all. (Cp. Rom. ix. 5.)

Obs. 1. In Ps. civ. 1—4 He, who is "clad with light as with a garment," makes "His ministers (λειτουργούς) a flame of fire." He is wholly and absolutely Light, the pure Fount of Eternal Love (1 John i. 5, iv. 8, 16); they are created beings, kindled by His rays so that they are as *flames* of holy Love.

Obs. 2. The noun, *Saraph*, occurs elsewhere only of the *fiery serpents:* Num. xxi. 6, 8; Deut. viii. 15, and ch. xiv. 29, xxx. 6 (in the two last places with the epithet "flying," *s. w. a.* here). This singular fact is full of instruction:—

(1) Those fiery serpents in the wilderness were God's instruments, inflicting the righteous penalty of sin; sent by Him whose Presence on Sinai had been "as devouring fire." He, whose ministers they were, was in the midst of them, "high and lifted up," to heal all who looked to Him in faith.

(2) But there was a deeper mystery yet.

There was a *fallen* seraph; in whom the fiery nature, turned inwardly in self-contemplation and self-trust, had become self-torturing. His fiery darts, even "bitter words" of unbelief, had found lodgement in man, and produced death; turning the paradisiacal earth into a wilderness.

Could those wounds be healed? Could the earth, tenanted by man, be restored to "the glory of God"?

Yes; He who now as Judge was "lifting up a standard" (*v.* 26) to the nations, to come to burn the cities of Israel (i. 7, *serufoth*), would Himself effect that great restoration. He who now sate on "the throne of His glory" would Himself "tabernacle in flesh" (John i. 14); and suffer that Sacred Tabernacle to be "consumed with the jealousy of God's House" (John ii. 17 f.), in order that in Him the holy Love of God might be manifested to the world (John iii. 14—17), and "the fallen tabernacle of David" become the Universal Church. (Cp. John xii. 31—35.)

Obs. 3. The verb (*saraf*) is frequently used of fire burning up a sacrifice (Lev. iv. 12, 21, &c.) or what has been polluted by impiety (Lev. x. 6; Josh. vii. 25) or is ceremonially impure (as the leprous garment, Lev. xiii. 52). Cp. on i. 7.

Obs. 4. Strange that at the very time when this Vision was granted, the Brazen Serpent was worshipped in Jerusalem! (See on v. 30.)

six wings] Gesenius ('Thes.' p. 1342) notices that the Amshaspands of the Persepolitan monuments have a human figure with six wings, of which two cover the feet. This may be a trace of the influence exercised by the Jews of the dispersion on the peoples among whom they lived. (Cp. Introd. II. § 5.)

he covered his face] Adoring, but not venturing to scrutinize, that glorious Presence.

his feet] Recognizing the imperfection of the services which he had performed in the lower parts of creation.

Obs. The priests had to wash their feet before commencing their ministration.

he did fly] This may refer to the hovering motion, by which they were sustained (Forerius, Delitzsch).—A different form of the verb is used in *v.* 5.

3. *one cried unto another*] Or, "the one called to the other;"—the one host to the other (cp. Exod. xiv. 20).

Holy, holy, holy] He is free from all imperfection. Although sin has entered into His creation, and has not yet been eliminated, yet they can say (as the Church below said) "Thou remainest holy" (Ps. xxii. 3).

Holy; even now, when He, the *Creator*, is rooting up His own "Vine" on earth.

Holy; though His work in *redeeming* Israel seems to have come to nought, and His pretermission of human sin (Rom. iii. 25) appears to militate against justice.

Holy; though His sanctifying and illumining grace is so frustrated by man's perverseness.

the LORD *of hosts*] The name especially associated with the Ark of the Covenant (2 S. vi. 2).

the whole earth is full of his glory] Lit. "His glory is the fulness of all the earth." Deprived of that glory by man's sin (cp. Rom. iii. 23), the earth was "*made subject to vanity*" (Rom. viii. 20). But the seraphic host knew that this should not be perpetual. Each onward step in God's dealings with man had revealed to their eager study (1 Pet. i. 12) somewhat of the great design. So should it be even now.

Though Adam "sinned and fell short of the glory of God," yet faith had sung, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name *in all the earth*" (Ps. viii. 1, 9).

Though the generation that witnessed the

eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

† Heb. *and in his hand a live coal.* 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, †having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

† Heb. *caused* it *to touch.* 7 And he †laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy

great Paschal deliverance was sentenced to die in the wilderness, in the very oath which spake their doom these words were contained, "As I live, *all the earth shall be filled with My glory.*" (Num. xiv. 21.)

Though the people to whom Joshua, guided by the ark of "the Lord of the whole earth," had "given rest," fell away, and were now, by Isaiah's mouth, declared to have forfeited the goodly land; yet in the courts of heaven the anthem is again raised, which testifies of the approach of the times when the earth, so long the arena of conflict between good and evil, shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Was not the "secret of the Lord" respecting God's *final Temple*, "Immanuel," now revealing itself to the holy angels?

4. *the posts of the door*] Or, *the* **bases** *of the* **thresholds**; the supports on which they rested. Cp. Amos ix. 1.

The "shaking" of these implied a change in the dispensation. A "new and living way" was to be made into the sanctuary of God (Heb. x. 20), by which access to it would be granted to all nations.

The verb rendered "shook" occurs twice in vii. 2 (of "the heart of *the house of David*").

The LXX. has σαλευθῇ; which is the word used in Matt. xxiv. 29; Acts iv. 31, xvi. 26; Heb. xii. 26, 27.

of him that cried] The singular doubtless used as a collective (Del.); yet expressing the unity of that mighty choir.

Obs. So in the account of the temple-dedication (2 Chro. v. 13) we read: "It was with the trumpeters and singers, *as if they were one man*, to make *one sound* heard."

the house was filled with smoke] as "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace (cp. Gen. xv. 17); and the whole mount *quaked* greatly" (Exod. xix. 18. Cp. Ps. xviii. 7, 8, lxxiv. 1, lxxx. 5, civ. 32; Joel ii. 30, H. iii. 3; ch. ix. 18; Rev. xv. 8).

5. The prophet had so deeply sympathized with God's cause, that in ii. 9 he had even said, "Pardon them not." In ch. v he had uttered six "woes" against the rebellious. Now, in the presence of the Holy One, he is struck (like Job, xlii. 5, 6) with a deep sense of his own sinfulness; and places himself on the level of the people at large. "*Woe is me*," he says; "*I am undone*;" or, "cut off" (*s. w. a.* xv. 1; Hos. iv. 5, 6, x. 7, 15). The coming-in of that holy dispensation,—must it not exclude even him from communion with God, the only "fountain of life"?

I am a man of unclean lips] The leper was to "put a covering over his lip, and to cry, Unclean, unclean" (Lev. xiii. 45). King Uzziah had been stricken down to the level of that confession for violating the sanctity of God's house; but now *he*—the prophet—had gazed on a far holier Sanctuary, in which the King of Glory was enthroned;—and the sight had stricken him with the sense of his spiritual leprosy.

Obs. Even Moses and Aaron (the "saint of the Lord") incurred the anger of God, "because they believed not the Lord, *to sanctify Him* in the eyes of the children of Israel" (Num. xx. 12). Moses, no less than Korah, was excluded from the land of promise. What if the prophet, no less than Uzziah, were to be shut out from that Kingdom of glory?

the King, the LORD of hosts] The "King of Glory" (Ps. xxiv. 10).

6. Isaiah is now taught, in personal experience, the truth which he afterwards proclaimed (lvii. 15; cp. lxvi. 2), that "*the High and Lofty One*, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is *Holy One*,...dwells with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit" and "trembleth at His word."

One of the "fiery ones" flew to him, "*with a live coal in his hand*," "*taken from off the altar*," with the golden "tongs" (Exod. xxv. 38) of the Sanctuary.

Not even a seraph had power to impart sanctification to sinful man. That could be done only through a communication from the altar of Divine Love, which the highest archangel could take and convey only through God's own appointed instrumentality.

That such is the meaning of the "live coal" may be gathered from Song of Sol. viii. 6:—"Love is strong as death; jealousy is stern as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, a flame of the Lord."

That "fire of love," which eventually "consumed" the human soul of Christ, had all along been burning on the Heavenly Altar, and had expiated the sins of every lowly suppliant for mercy; making his prayers and praises, the "calves of his lips" (Hos. xiv. 2; cp. ch. lvii. 19), to be as "the incense," or as "an evening oblation" (Ps. cxli. 2).

The assurance of this was now conveyed to the prophet by one of those "ministering (λειτουργικά) spirits," who are "sent forth for service on account of them that are to be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14).

7. *he laid it upon my mouth*] Rather (as marg.), "he caused it to touch my lips."

Jeremiah, "sanctified from the womb"?

lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for [c]us? Then said I, [†]Here *am* I; send me.

9 ¶ And he said, Go, and tell this people, [d]Hear ye [‖†]indeed, but under-

[c] Gen. 1. 26. [†] Heb. *Behold me.* [d] Matth. 13. 14. Mark 4. 12.

Luke 8. 10. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. [‖] Or, *without ceasing, &c.* [†] Heb. *hear ye in hearing, &c.*

to be a prophet, was in like manner prepared for the work of "pulling down" the old covenant, and "building up" the new (i. 9).

thine iniquity ... purged] Rather, *and thy iniquity* **shall depart** *and thy sin* **shall be** *purged.* Aq., Symm., Theod. ἀποστήσεται... ἐξιλασθήσεται.

The verb rendered "purged" is the one used in the account of the Day of Atonement, Lev. xvi. 10, 17, 20, 27, 30, 33, 34.

Thus Isaiah was taught, that although the temple, with its ritual purifications, was about to disappear, God had made provision for a more perfect Atonement, which "pertained to the conscience." And if he had been thus purged, all who learnt the same lesson of lowly penitence would likewise be so. (Cp. xxvii. 9, where the same two verbs occur: after the other Vineyard parable.)

Now, therefore, he is prepared (as St Paul was, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15) to go forth in obedience to the will of God to be "a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death."

8. *the voice of the Lord*] ADONAY. This Divine Name occurs in this chapter three times; *vv.* 1, 8, 11 (see on *v.* 1): also in viii. 7, ix. 7, 16, x. 12, xi. 11, &c. Cp. Ps. lxxxix. 50, 51, cx. 5.

Whom shall I send?] Nothing was said as to the nature of the mission. What the prophet had already proclaimed to Israel (in chh. i—v), coupled with what had been presented to him in vision, could, indeed, leave little doubt respecting it. But, in any case, it was *the King* who was speaking; it was the Lord, whose Name, revealed to Moses on the mount (Exod. xxxiv. 5—9), had been verified in every generation; it was *the Holy and Gracious One.* His work must be perfectly good.

Obs. When Moses was bidden to go as God's envoy to bring Israel out of Egypt, he shrank from the task (Exod. iv. 10—13). Almost as if he foresaw the result of that first redemption, he said: "I pray, O Lord; send now by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." And afterwards he despaired of influencing Pharaoh, because (he says) "I am of uncircumcised lips" (vi. 12).

Isaiah has had his lips sanctified; and can anticipate that his mission will relate to a more glorious manifestation of Redeeming Love: that it shall prepare for the time when "God's glory will fill all the earth."

who will go for us?] The language here used carries our thoughts back to Gen. i. 26; "Let US make man." The work, of which God's envoy would have to speak, was not inferior in importance to that work of creation. In fact, it was far greater.

The plural pronoun cannot be accounted for by supposing that the King addressed His ministering attendants. *They* wait to catch every intimation of His will (Ps. ciii. 20); they are not associated with Him in counsel. Isaiah himself asks; "*With whom took He counsel?*" (xl. 13).

"There is no angel in heaven," it has been said, "to whom He does not stoop down through infinite degrees, when He communicates His thoughts."

The Trisagion, if it does not expressly propound the solution, implies it.

Here am I; send me] This rendering tends to throw a wrong emphasis on the pronouns. Better, "Here I am; send me."

The first clause is the usual response made by a person who is summoned by name (Gen. xxii. 1, 7, 11). The prophet felt that the question was meant for him.

The second clause should be read, "SEND me:"—use me as Thou wilt; to speak Thy word, to do Thy work.

9. So now he is sent forth as more than a prophet, — an apostle as well; a King's envoy; empowered to bind and to loose in the King's name.

Obs. From this time onward Isaiah stands, in a way that no other prophet did, as a living, historical, type of Christ:—an anticipatory, personal, "sign:"—even as his name, "*the salvation of the Lord*," foreshadowed that of the future Saviour.

tell this people]—who, having rejected Me (*v.* 24), are no longer *My* people. The expression "this people" is used after the sin of the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 9, 21, 31; and at Kivroth-Hattaävah, Num. xi. 11, 12, 13, 14; and when the "*sentence of wandering*" was passed, Num. xiv. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19. So below, ch. viii. 6, 11, 12, ix. 16 (H. 15), xxviii. 11, 14, xxix. 13, 14; and in Jer. vii. 33, &c. Cp. also "*the people*" in ix. 9, 13, 19, &c.

Hear ye indeed...] Rather, *Hear ye* **on still**... *see ye* **on still**;—implying that the word would continue to be communicated, and the light to shine around them,—as it did eminently during Isaiah's ministry.

The message of salvation would still be uttered in wondrous richness; but in such a manner, that they who refused to "*walk* in

stand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be

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the light of the Lord" (ii. 5) should not discern its interior meaning. They cannot do so; for they have declined to believe in any "work of the Lord" which they do not see with their natural sight (v. 19).

Especially would this be the case with regard to the great "tidings" (liii. 1) of the Atonement effected by God's Servant.

Nay, when at length the "Light of the World" came, they were like men "groping and stumbling at noon-day" (lix. 10). Though they heard from Him "things kept secret from the foundation of the world," they understood not (Matt. xiii. 35). Though they saw His mighty deeds, they perceived not (Matt. xvi. 1—5). Cp. on viii. 6.

Obs. A remarkable evidence of this blindness is given by one of the hymns sung among them at this day; in which they say: "O Lord, build; build Thy House shortly (*beqarov*), speedily, speedily (*bimherah*);"—using the two words of ch. v. 19.

10. *Make...fat*] The LXX. and Symm. have taken the verbs as indicatives (or, as infinitives used indicatively), "The heart of this people is become fat." And so the quotations in Matt. xiii. 15; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 27. The rendering of A. V. is that of the Vulg. and of most interpreters.

The LXX. may have been influenced by the fact that in the only other place where this form of the verb occurs it is used intransitively (Neh. ix. 25); "They took strong cities and a fat land...and were filled and *became fat*;"—where it has nearly the same sense as the simple verb in Deut. xxxii. 15; Jer. v. 25 (the only other places where the verb occurs at all). (Cp. on ch. lix. 10.)

make...heavy] The same words are used (of the people's action on themselves) in Zech. vii. 11; "But they refused to hearken...and their ears *they made heavy*, so as not to hear."

and shut] Rather, *and* **smear**. Two forms of the same verb occur in xxix. 9; in regard to the people's self-flattery, and its result.

lest they see] Cp. Ps. lxix. 23. As the sentence was a *national* one, it would, perhaps, be better to keep the singular form (as in the Hebrew) throughout. "Make **its** ears heavy...**its** eyes; lest **it** see, &c."

understand with their heart] Rather, *and* **its heart should understand**, as in xxxii. 4.

and convert] Or, *and* **turn back**, referring to the heart, which had revolted from God (1 K. xii. 27; cp. xviii. 37).

Obs. Similarly, "when it turns" in 2 Cor. iii. 16 seems to refer to "their heart" in *v.* 15;—probably with allusion to the present passage.

and be healed] Or, "and one should heal it." Cp. xix. 22, liii. 5, lvii. 18, 19; Exod. xv. 26; Hos. xiv. 4.

The Targ. has: "and it should be forgiven them." Cp. Mark iv. 12.

Obs. 1. This sentence of blinding, the subject of Rom. xi, is confessed by St Paul to be as yet among "the unsearchable things" of God (Rom. xi. 33—35; where he quotes Isai. xl. 13, 14). Yet he points out, that its immediate consequence was the extension of mercy to the Gentiles; and assures us that in its ultimate issue it will exalt the wondrous mercy of God towards all.

Obs. 2. In the 29th chapter of Deuteronomy (to which Isaiah referred in i. 9, &c.) Moses says to the people: "Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." They were continually allowing "the root of bitterness," worldly unbelief, to spring up among them. And, after all that God had done during 700 years to exterminate that accursed root, it again in Uzziah's time sent forth suckers as poisonous as those of former days.

Must the contest of God's Spirit with man's obstinacy go on for ever? Long forbearance on God's part, with ever clearer revelations of His purposes, had brought them no nearer the "kingdom of God." Did not Uzziah's daring act of profanity prove that the withdrawal of privileges, which were so abused, would be an act of mercy?

It has been said by one who was not referring to Isaiah: "When civilization becomes corrupt, and men are living below their faith, I think it may often be in mercy that God *strikes the nations with blindness*;—that the only remedy lies in thus taking away an influence which they resist, and leaving them to learn the stern lesson of self-dependence." (Mr Hutton, 'Essays,' I. p. 11. Cp. also Dr Irons, 'Bampton Lectures,' pp. 137, 138.)

Obs. 3. It may be inferred from Matt. xiii. 13—15, that one of the methods by which the sentence was to be carried out was, the declaration of the mysteries of the king-

wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be † utterly desolate,

† Heb. *desolate with desolation.*

12 And the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

13 ¶ But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, ‖ and *it* shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose ‖ substance *is* in them, when they cast *their leaves: so* the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof.

‖ Or, *when it is returned, and hath been brousted.* ‖ Or, *stock or, stem.*

dom of heaven in a parabolic form. (Cp. also Mark vii. 10—21.) This, while it saved them from the guilt of sinning against clearer light, gave an opportunity for their worldly self-confidence to bring ruin upon the outward framework of the Jewish state (cp. xxviii. 14, 15, xxx. 12—14, &c.). Then at last, in that period of affliction (Deut. xxx. 2—10, xxxi. 17), they would give up the contest with God's Spirit, and "return, and be healed."

For some remarks on the language of this sentence, see Note A.

11. The prophet receives the commission; yet, confident that Israel was not *finally* rejected, he asks; "*Lord, how long?*" (lit. "until when?"). Cp. Dan. viii. 13.

Obs. It had been the cry of Moses (Ps. xc. 13), and of Ethan (Ps. lxxxix. 46).

without inhabitant] Until the prediction of v. 9 be realized (*s. w.*).

the land] Or, "the ground;" as in vii. 16.

Not the geographical "land of Canaan," but *the soil*—the portion of earth-surface assigned to you by God for the support of your temporal life (Exod. xx. 12; cp. Deut. xxx. 18, 20, xxxi. 13); the Lord's own domain (xiv. 2; cp. Zech. ii. 12), given to you to hold as His children. This soil, so long enriched by His blessing (Deut. xxvi. 2, 10, 15), shall now be waste.

12. *removed men far away*] *s. w. a.* xxvi. 15. Their tenure of the land rested solely on God's covenant. Since they had "removed their heart far from" His covenant (xxix. 13), let them be there where their hearts were (cp. lvii. 9).

a great...] Or, "and large shall be the forsaken (tract);"—the area abandoned to depopulation. So the word appears to be used in xvii. 9, lxii. 4. (Cp. the participle in liv. 6, lx. 15.)

This *abandonment* had been distinctly foretold in Lev. xxvi. 43.

in the midst of the land] They had thought to "dwell alone *in the midst of the land*" (*v.* 8), filling it with their splendour. Those broad domains should be everywhere desolate (cp. x. 23); and only a small remnant be left behind (vii. 22).

13. *But yet in it...*] Or, "But there is still in it a tenth;" reserved by God for His own special use. See Lev. xxvii. 30, 32:—"As for all the tenth of the land, of the seed of the land.....it is the Lord's; holy to the Lord." (Cp. on v. 10.)

and it shall return] They shall return as penitents to their Lord (x. 21); and then to their land, as in the year of jubile (Lev. xxv. 10).

and shall be eaten] Rather, *shall be* **for burning** (*s. w. a.* iv. 4, v. 5). After the restoration, the same "spirit of burning" would again be needed to purge away the unholy members of the community.

as a teil tree] Or, "as a terebinth" (i. 30). In i. 30 the comparison was to a tree whose vitality was decaying. Here it is the reverse.

whose substance] Or, "which on shedding its leaves hath its substance (or, strength) in it." Though its sap retire from the naked branches at the approach of winter, yet it abides in *the root*.

The verbal noun (*shalléketh*) rendered "shedding its leaves" (so Targ., Rashi, and Kimchi) occurs here only. But since an allied form of the verb is used, in xiv. 19, of being "hurled away...*as an abominable branch*," and in Jer. xxii. 19, 28, of Jehoiakim and Coniah's being *hurled away* as impure; and since, moreover, the gate of the temple-yard, through which the sweepings of the temple were cast, was named *Shalléketh* (see on 1 Chro. xxvi. 16); we may feel sure that the underlying idea is—"when that which is dead and worthless has been cast off from it, and swept away to the burning."

Obs. Symm. has here ἀποβαλοῦσα τὰ φύλλα. Now the verb noticed above, as employed of Jehoiakim in Jer. xxii. 19, is also applied to Judah's being "cast out" in Jer. lii. 3, and this rejection is called ἀποβολή in Rom. xi. 15. In Hos. ix. 3 Symm. renders "unclean" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 5 above) by ἀπόβλητος; so that the parts of the nation here contrasted with the "*holy seed*" are to be thought of as dead leaves (or, perhaps, lopped-off, withered, branches, cp. xxvii. 11) cast outside the temple area.

the holy seed shall be the substance thereof] its vital strength which endures, although during the chill winter of the captivity it has withdrawn underground.

The "holy seed" (in contrast to i. 4, "seed of evildoers") doubtless included all the true "seed of Abraham" (xli. 8); by whom the continuity of the line of saints was preserved. But the "purgation" went on with growing intensity, until the "one seed" (Gal. iii. 16)

stood forth to view, alone possessing the living power of "benediction" (Gen. xxii. 18). Yet He too, the one "Green Tree" (Luke xxiii. 31) in the desert world, was subjected to "burning," to the searching flame on the Altar of Holy Love. But He rose out of it—the anti-typical Isaac—uninjured; to shew Himself the vital "substance" of the True Vine,—the ever-spreading "Israel of God:" by which the world was to be "filled with the glory of God."

Obs. The last line of ch. vi supplied consolation for the prophet during the sixteen years of silent waiting which followed the vision. The first and more immediate reference of the "Holy Seed" was embodied in the name which he gave to his eldest son, *Shear-Yashuv* (vii. 3), "A remnant shall return;" while its ultimate application was to Him, whose glory he had gazed on in vision in ch. vi, and whose advent is set forth in chh. vii—ix.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 10.)

The three verbs here used, השמן, הכבד, השע, are remarkable.

I. *First;* they are connected with the three prominent words used in chh. v and vi respecting Judah's corporate privileges.

1. The "men of Judah" had been planted in the "hill flowing with oil" (בֶּן שָׁמֶן, v. 1).

2. To them belonged the temple, in which "The King of Glory" resided (כבודו, vi. 3, iii. 8; cp. Rom. ix. 4).

3. They had been His "plant of delights" (שעשועים, v. 7).

II. *Secondly;* those privileges were in their nature typical of "good things to come," in the Kingdom which Isaiah was sent to announce. In speaking, therefore, of the future, he naturally used language which linked that future on to the past; but, in so doing, he gave opportunity for the sensual-minded to turn "their table into a snare" (Ps. lxix. 22; Rom. xi. 9, 10). Thus—

1. Isaiah spoke of the "oil of gladness" (שמן), which the Lord's Anointed would pour over Zion's "broken-hearted" mourners (lxi. 1, 2).

They took the tidings of great joy, and made it serve only to increase their *insensibility* to the spiritual teaching which accompanied it. From the rich viands of the "feast of fat things" (שמנים, xxv. 6) their diseased stomach secreted only "flattering unction to their soul;" filling up "the caul" which the prophetic word had torn (Hos. xiii. 6—8), till "their heart was stolid with fat" (Ps. cxix. 70).

So when "*the Christ of God*" came, Jeshurun's worldly heart could not discern Him (Matt. xxvi. 63).

2. Isaiah spoke of the glory (כבוד) that should belong to the future Temple, Messiah's "resting-place" (xi. 10), and to the Kingdom and City of God (xxxv. 2, xl. 5, lx. 1).

Instead of sinking down in contrite self-abasement (as the prophet had done, vi. 5), before One so "glorious in holiness," they "lifted up their heart *to boast*" (להכבד: 2 Chro. xxv. 19; cp. Rom. ii. 17, 23). Their ears were so full of the din of carnal traditions respecting Messiah, that they could not "hear the voice that followed them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it" (ch. xxx. 21).

So, when "the Wisdom of God...ordained before the world for our glory" was manifested, they would not hear (John vi. 60). They "knew" Him not. They "crucified *the Lord of Glory*" (1 Cor. ii. 8).

3. Isaiah spoke of the time when none should do hurt in God's "holy mountain," so that "a child might sport (שעשע) over the hole of the asp" (xi. 8); and when the children of Zion should "be delighted with the abundance of her glory, and be dandled (שעשע) upon her knees" (lxvi. 11, 12).

They took the "letter" of the promise, and used it to spice their cup of self-delusion; until the fumes of intoxication spread like a film over their eyes; and they still "amused themselves" (השתעשע), while ruin was close upon them (xxix. 9, 10).

So, when the Eternal Wisdom of God (cp. on v. 7) visited those frivolous and wayward children (Luke vii. 31—35), they "saw no beauty in Him" (liii. 2); but condemned Him to death because He claimed to be *the Son of God.*

This is not the place to inquire how near Christian Europe, in this period of "the riches of the Gentiles" (Rom. xi. 12, 20, 22), has approached to the formalism, self-conceit, and unbelief of the elder Church.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Ahaz, being troubled with fear of Rezin and Pekah, is comforted by Isaiah.* 10 *Ahaz, having liberty to choose a sign, and refusing it, hath for a sign, Christ promised.* 17 *His judgment is prophesied to come by Assyria.*

AND it came to pass in the days of [a]Ahaz the son of Jotham, the [a] 2 Kin. 16. 5.

CHAP. VII. We now come to a new cycle of prophecy; which includes, in any case, chh. vii—xii, and should, probably, embrace chh. xiii and xiv: so that it will cover the whole extent of Ahaz's reign.

Ahaz, alarmed at the combination of the kings

son of Uzziah, king of Judah, *that* Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.

2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria † is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind.

† Heb. *resteth on Ephraim.*

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of Ephraim and Syria, whose avowed design was to overthrow the Davidic succession (vii. 6), applied to the king of Assyria for help. The prophet foretold that the confederacy should be broken, and Samaria and Damascus plundered; but that the tide of Assyrian invasion should also swell over Judah. This would be permitted for Judah's chastisement. When that end was accomplished, the "staff of God's indignation" should be broken (x. 12, 34, xiv. 25, 29); as an evidence that God's promise to Judah (to David's house in particular) stood inviolably firm (vii. 14, ix. 6, 7, xi. 1—9), and that the true Church, the Zion of "the Holy One of Israel" (xii. 6, cp. lx. 14), should be effectually saved, whilst Babylon was brought down to Hades (xiv. 15).

The prophecy throughout is twofold in character; minatory and consolatory. For the comfort of the faithful (xii. 1), it set forth in bold relief the divine nature of the expected Son of David (vii. 14, viii. 8, 10, 13, 14, ix. 6, 7). For the warning of the apostatizers, it predicted the downfall of the northern kingdom (vii. 8), and the oppression of Ahaz by the monarch whom he hired (vii. 20); but it also went on to speak of the Righteous King who should purify the whole earth, and (without reservation of race or people) would "slay the wicked" (xi. 4, 9), and "destroy the sinners out of the earth" (xiii. 9, 11).

1. *in the days of Ahaz*] Since the first year of Jotham's reign (vi. 1) the prophet had uttered no written prophecy. Jotham, seriously impressed by the judgment on his father, had at least outwardly conformed to the law (2 K. xv. 34; 2 Chro. xxvii. 2); and the "stretched out hand" was for a time restrained.

But we are told that "the people still did corruptly" (2 Chro. xxvii. 2) under Jotham. And, how far the king's own family was from escaping the general contagion, appeared at his death. Ahaz broke out at once into virulent impiety, practising the direst "abominations of the heathen whom the Lord *cast out* before the children of Israel" (2 K. xvi. 3; cp. on ch. i. 31). Chastisement was not long delayed.

Rezin...Pekah...] This introductory notice is nearly the same as 2 K. xvi. 5.

toward Jerusalem] Rather, **to**; for they did actually commence a siege (2 K. xvi. 5).

could not prevail against it] Or, **prevailed not in fighting** *against it.* The words are the same as in Num. xxii. 11, when Balak sent to Syria (xxiii. 7) for help, saying—"Peradventure I shall *be able to overcome them*" (lit. "I shall prevail in fighting with him").

Obs. They failed, as Balak failed; because it was yet true of Judah that "the Lord, his God, is with him (*immo*, cp. *v.* 14), and the shout of *a King* (cp. vi. 1—5) within him" (cp. xii. 6); Num. xxiii. 21.

2. The narrative, which now begins, refers to what took place *before* the siege spoken of in *v.* 1.

the house of David] *vv.* 13, 17; cp. xxii. 22, 23. This calls attention to the object of the invasion (*v.* 6); and, at the same time, brings into prominence the faithlessness of Ahaz., (Cp. xxxvii. 35; 2 Chro. xxi. 7.) It is also suited to the contents of the great prophecy which is to follow (cp. 2 S. vii. 11, 13, 16, 19, 25, 26, 29; Luke i. 27, 69, ii. 4).

is confederate with] Lit. "hath rested upon" (*v.* 19, xi. 2). It implies a cordial alliance. Hitherto the northern kingdom had for the most part acted as a barrier between Syria and Judah. Now Syria had gained Israel over, and could use Samaria as a base of operations against Judah.

Ephraim] This name of the northern kingdom is especially fitted to stand in contrast with "the house of David;" as Ephraim had all along claimed to be paramount, and resented the assignment of the "leadership" to Judah. (Cp. 1 Chro. v. 2.)

and his heart was moved] **shook.** The verb is the same as in vi. 4. The "house of David," when severed from God, could not but begin to shake towards its fall; as the temple had previously done.

as the trees of the wood] All of them waving to and fro; but confusedly.

It seems most probable from the sequel of this narrative that Ahaz had already asked help from Assyria, and that his present consternation arose, in part, from the seeming frustration of his policy; in part, from his uneasy conscience.

So far as can be made out, the course of events had been this. A little before Jotham's death Rezin and Pekah had begun to take up a hostile position towards Judah (2 K. xv. 37). At the beginning of the reign of Ahaz they had made separate expeditions against the kingdom of Judah (cp. 2 K. xviii. 6; 2 Chro. xxviii. 5—15); Rezin going southward, and capturing Elath on the Red Sea; while Pekah gained a great victory in

3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and ‖Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the [b]conduit of the upper pool in the ‖highway of the fuller's field;

4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, †neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,

6 Let us go up against Judah, and ‖vex it, and let us make a breach there-

‖ That is, *The remnant shall return.*
[b] 2 Kin. 18. 17.
‖ Or, *causeway.*
† Heb. *let not thy heart be tender.*
‖ Or, *waken.*

Judah itself, carrying away 200,000 women and children captive to Samaria. A remarkable incident then occurred. The prophet Oded went out from Samaria to meet the returning army, and denounced their unbrotherly conduct; with such success, that the captives were escorted back to their own country.

So signal an instance of God's goodness, in "turning men's hearts backward," might well have stirred up Ahaz to better thoughts. But instead of "returning, that he might be healed," he sought help from Assyria; a step which, on becoming known, would more than anything else provoke Rezin and Pekah to fresh hostility. Indeed it is probable, that a common dread of the rising power of Assyria, which had begun to interfere with Palestine in Menahem's reign (B.C. 771—760), was what had bound Syria and Ephraim in so firm alliance. Possibly this may in part have led them to entertain the project of setting up a vassal-king of their own in Jerusalem; since such a step would have enabled them to consolidate Syro-Palestine into one compact system.

Obs. Hosea had reproved Ephraim for leaning on Assyria, and foretold that they should be carried away captive by it (v. 13, viii. 9, 10, x. 5—7, 14). The knowledge of this prediction would make Ahaz's conduct appear in Pekah's eyes trebly heinous.

3. If Shear-yashuv's name were given soon after the vision in ch. vi, he would be now fifteen or sixteen years old. His name ("a remnant shall return," x. 21) by itself called on all, who heard it, to return to God and trust in His grace.

at the end of the conduit] No doubt Ahaz was engaged in concealing the waters of the Upper Pool (the "Birket-el-Mamilla,"=the "dragon's well" of Neh. ii. 13), so that the besiegers might have no water, while the city would retain its supply. (Cp. on xxii. 9.)

the fuller's field] (xxxvi. 2.) So named because clothes washed in the pool were laid there to bleach.

4. *Take heed*] Beware,—of that worst of enemies, thy own wayward heart.

It is the word that is used so often in the law (*e.g.* Exod. xxxiv. 12; Deut. iv. 9, vi. 12, xii. 13, 19, 30), when Israel is cautioned against heathen alliances or practices.

be quiet] calm and tranquil. For "*in quietness* (*s. w.*) and confidence is Israel's strength" (xxx. 15). But how *could* Ahaz be calm? The storm-tossed sea in the sinner's soul "cannot rest" (*s. w.*, lvii. 20).

Not, of course, that Ahaz was wrong in making siege preparations. His sin was in his rejection of God's help (xxii. 11);—as the prophet shews, when he adds,—

fear not, neither be fainthearted] The words are those which the priest was bidden to use when the people were about to enter battle: "*Let not your heart faint; fear not;* make not haste, neither be terrified (cp. ch. viii. 12); for the Lord your God is He that goeth with you (*immakem*), to fight for you with your enemies, to save you." Deut. xx. 3, 4.

for the two tails of...] Rather, *for* **these two tails of** *smoking firebrands;* these brands that are nearly burnt out; of which little more than the charred, if yet smoking, stumps remain. Fear not them:—fear Him whose anger is as "devouring fire" (v. 24).

the son of Remaliah] *vv.* 5, 9. The phrase appears to call attention to the fact that Pekah was a usurper. He had raised himself to the throne by assassinating the son of that Menahem, in whose reign Assyria first invaded Israel. Menahem had paid tribute to Pul; Pekah and his confederates probably took their stand on the ground of patriotism (2 K. xv. 19, 20, 25). That his policy was anti-Assyrian seems implied by Tiglath-Pileser's severity (ib. *v.* 29).

5. *Because...*] Some have taken this as continuative of *v.* 4: "Do not fear...because ..." It is far better to give it its usual force (cp. iii. 16, viii. 6, &c.); as introducing the protasis, of which *v.* 7 is the apodosis.

taken evil counsel] Or, "devised evil." The prophet lays bare before Ahaz, in *v.* 6, what their secret *plan* was:—so shewing that he was the ambassador of One, who discerns the thoughts of the heart (cp. 2 K. vi. 11, 12):—who, consequently, knew well what Ahaz had now resolved to do.

6. *vex it*] Or, "strike horror into it" (causative of the verb in *v.* 16).

in for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *even* the son of Tabeal:

7 Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

8 For the head of Syria *is* Damascus, and the head of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, † that it be not a people. † Heb. *from a people.*

make a breach therein] Or, "take it by storm" (2 Chro. xxxii. 1). The verb is used of the final "breaking up" of Jerusalem at the end of the Chaldean siege, Jer. xxxix. 2, lii. 7.

set **up** *a king*] This was the heart of their policy;—to get rid of the Davidic family. King-making was a familiar process in the northern kingdom. Baasha, Zimri, Omri, Jehu, Menahem, and Pekah had all cut their way to the throne by the sword. It was not unknown in Damascus (2 K. viii. 16). In the southern kingdom, on the other hand, the crown had been handed down in the family of David; no one (Athaliah excepted) attempting to deviate from the legitimate line of succession. Even Samaria and Syria, Egypt and Assyria, up to the present time appear to have dealt with the Davidic monarchy in a way that can hardly be accounted for, unless we suppose them influenced (however vaguely) by a religious feeling of reverence.

The weakening of the northern kingdom under the attack of Assyria may well be thought to be referred to in ch. ix. 9, 10; where Ephraim proudly resolves that, if "the bricks are *fallen down*," they shall be replaced by "hewn stone." The policy, which had prevailed since Abijah's victory over Jeroboam (2 Chro. xiii. 3—20), of respecting the throne of David, had failed. Pekah would initiate a more decided course of action; putting an end to the separation, which weakened the nation. To storm Jerusalem, sweep away those offensive things, the Davidic throne and temple, and set up a king amenable to what they held to be enlightened principles of government—was the line of action now marked out for themselves by Pekah and Rezin.

the son of Tabeal] The words come in with marked emphasis; scarcely inferior to that of "the king of Asshur" in *v.* 17. It cannot be doubted that there was something in the man and his antecedents which gave him more than ordinary qualifications for being the nominee, on whom Pekah and Rezin agreed to confer the royalty of Judah.

The name is Syriac, not Hebrew (cp. Ezra iv. 7); and means "God is good." Its form reminds us of the name *Tav-rimmon*, "Rimmon is good" (1 K. xv. 18); with which name it stands in so striking a contrast, that we are led to think of a Syrian nobleman of high rank, in the preceding century, who vowed that he would offer sacrifices only to the One True God (2 K. v. 17). Nothing more likely than that Naaman should wish to commemorate the kindness he had received from the God of Israel—the God who had done for him what Rimmon was incapable of doing (2 K. v. 18)—by naming a son of his, *Taveël*. As Naaman carried away earth from Samaria to erect an altar at Damascus, there is nothing improbable in the thought that his descendants would retain, at least externally, the religion of their renowned ancestor (2 K. v. 1). If, however, the "*son of Tabeal*" were the representative of Naaman's family, we can see how well he might answer the purposes of the two kings. Of an old Damascene family, he would unquestionably be loyal to Syria; as a descendant of the great captain, whose miraculous cure and conversion had thrown so much lustre over Samaria, he would be acceptable to the men of Israel; and—to crown all—as one whose ancestor had been healed of leprosy by the prophet Elisha and whose family worshipped before an altar to the Lord in the heart of Syria, he might even be preferred by the men of Judah to Ahaz, whose grandfather had been smitten with leprosy for profaning the sanctuary of God, and who himself was practising the worst enormities of heathenism.

Such a name would be likely to fall on Ahaz's ear with alarming significance.

7. Yet, whatever Ahaz's guilt might be, God would be faithful to His covenant with David. If David's children disobeyed His law, *He* would chastise them: but He would not allow any man to do so unauthorized by Himself (cp. Jer. xxvii. 6); least of all those whose aim was to emancipate themselves from the restraints that His revelation had thrown around them.

Thus saith the Lord GOD] **The Lord Jehovah**, as in 2 S. vii. 18, 19, 20; ch. xxviii. 16, xxx. 15, xl. 10, xlviii. 16, etc.—The LORD—the Sovereign Ruler and Judge;—JEHOVAH, who is carrying out His plan for the world's salvation.

It shall not stand] *s. w. a.* viii. 10, xiv. 24, xl. 8, xlvi. 10.

neither shall it come to pass] Lit. "and shall not be." The plan should not even take practical shape; much less would it achieve a permanent success.

8. For, what are these powers before which the man of no faith is trembling;—what are this Syria and Ephraim?

Syria is dominated over by Damascus, and

‖ Or, *Do ye not believe? it is because ye are not stable.* † Heb. *And the LORD added to speak.*

9 And the head of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. ‖If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

10 ¶ †Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

11 Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ‖ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

‖ Or, *make thy petition deep.*

12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

13 And he said, Hear ye now, O

Damascus culminates in Rezin;—yes, in Rezin, for Rimmon is a non-entity. Syria's highest head is "man, and not God" (cp. xxxi. 3).

And as for Ephraim, on which Syria is now resting complacently;—in spite of its present spasmodic efforts, it is drawing near to national dissolution. Within 65 years it shall be "broken" (*s. w. a.* viii. 9) so as to lose separate existence as "a people."

If the second year of Ahaz (741 B.C.) be taken as the starting-point, the 65th year would be 677 B.C.—the 22nd year of Manasseh; in which (according to the 'Seder Olam') he was carried away (2 Chro. xxxiii. 11) by the Assyrian armies to Babylon. It is most probable that the importation of Cuthæans into Samaria (2 K. xvii. 24; Ezra iv. 2),—the event which sealed the doom of Ephraim,—took place at the same time. From that time onward Ephraim has been scattered and lost among the nations.

This was not the case with Judah in its captivity. Judah still continued a "people." Its tribal sceptre remained.

9. As regarded the immediate danger, the like might be said of Ephraim as of Syria. The "crown of Ephraim's pride" (xxviii. 1) was Samaria; and the vital energy of Samaria was gathered up into the person of *the son of Remaliah;* — and what was he that he should presume to "stand up and take counsel" against Him who had said, "Yet I have set My king upon Zion, the mountain of My sanctuary"? that he should hope to invalidate the promise which God had made concerning One who should spring from David, and should be His "First-born, supreme over the kings of the earth" (Ps. lxxxix. 27)?

The faithful in Judah might answer Pekah's challenge in the words used 230 years before; "Behold, *God Himself is with us* (*immanu*) *as Head*" (A.V. "captain"), 2 Chro. xiii. 12.

The prophet's expressed premise, then, amounted to this:—"Your enemies have, at the best, but human strength and wisdom to support them; and the *basis* of their league is ready to collapse." The other premise was one that did not require to be enuntiated: "Zion is the head of all nations, and the Lord Himself is her Head." Instead of enuntiating that, the prophet merely implies it in the warning,—

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established] There is an assonance in the Hebrew between the two clauses which cannot well be transferred. The effect is:—"Be *firm in faith*, or ye will not be *made firm in fact*." God's faithfulness is as the strong mountains; if ye would be strong, ye must plant your feet on His promise.

It is the exhortation of Jehoshaphat (2 Chro. xx. 20) thrown into the form of a warning.

Obs. The sin, which brought the "sentence of wandering" on Israel was—unbelief. See Num. xiv. 11; "The Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people despise me (*s. w. a.* ch. v. 24), and how long will they *not believe*, for all *the signs* which I have shewed among them?"

10. *Moreover...*] Lit. "And the Lord added to speak...". Ahaz, it seems, remained silent.

11. *Ask thee a sign*]—an outward evidence of God's presence and good-will. (See on *v.* 14.)

of] Or, "from;" lit. "*from with*" (=*de chez*);—to come forth from Him.

the LORD thy God] An expression full both of encouragement and of solemn warning. It took the idolatrous king back to the thunders of Sinai; "I am *the LORD, thy God*, ... thou shalt have none other gods beside Me." Yet it said: "He is still *thine*, if thou wilt hearken unto Him;—willing to be a God to thee and thy seed after thee."

ask it either] Lit. "diving deep (1), ask thou, or soaring aloft (2) upward."

The former word (1) is used more especially of men's delving down into their own minds to discover some deep and subtle policy of their own; xxix. 15, xxxi. 7; Hos. v. 1, ix. 9; the latter (2) is used in Job xxxix. 27, Obad. 4 (cp. Jer. xlix. 16), of the lofty flight of the eagle.

The meaning, accordingly, will be: "Ask, either for some instance of the deep mysterious working of Divine Wisdom, or for some lofty and glorious exhibition of Divine Power." (On another reading adopted in some of the versions, see Note A.)

Ahaz in his impiety had endeavoured to obtain hidden knowledge by arts of necromancy (cp. viii. 19), and to enlist the powers of heaven in his service by nature-worship. Yet, all the while, the sure word of God's promise was "very nigh unto him" (Deut. xxx. 14).

12. In declining to ask for a sign, Ahaz

house of David; *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; [c]Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and [1]shall call his name Immanuel.

15 Butter and honey shall he eat,

[c] Matth. 1. 23. Luke 1. 31.

[1] Or, *thou, O Virgin, shalt call.*

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made a show of conforming to the precept of the Law, Deut. vi. 16 (cp. Exod. xvii. 7). He would not call for a *miraculous* display of God's power.

The fallacy lay in his not taking the passage along with its *context:* which was clearly opposed to his whole line of conduct.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you (for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you);...Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God;" namely, by *disbelieving the evidences you have had* of His presence among you. (Cp. Num. xiv. 22.) Now this was the very thing that Ahaz *was* doing;—trying whether by the help of Assyria he could not do without God—resorting to every species of heathen rite—ignoring the wondrous revelation God had given of Himself to Israel: and now refusing a sign, when God offered it to him. This was to shew yet greater distrust of Him, than if he had asked for additional evidence when there was no need for it.

In his estrangement of heart, Ahaz had come to look on God as his enemy;—as a dangerous Person, who was thwarting him in his most cherished plans, and from whom, therefore, it were best to stand entirely aloof. If he should ask a sign and it were to be granted him, would he not be bound by his own act and deed to confess the greatness of his past sins, to give up his politic plans for the future, to submit to the bonds and fetters of the old cycle of religious teaching, from which he had shaken himself free?

And what if the Assyrian king, on finding his terms of alliance declined, should "come and take away his place and nation"?

13. *And he said*] In *v.* 10, *The Lord spake unto Ahaz.* Now that Ahaz has refused the offer made to him, God's ambassador comes forward, and speaks in vindication of his Sovereign's faithfulness. He addresses himself to the "house of David;" because the whole "house and lineage of David" (Luke ii. 4) were the depositaries of God's great promise (2 S. vii. 16). The king had turned a deaf ear to him, but all were not equally obstinate. *Hezekiah* was at this time nine or ten years old (2 K. xviii. 2), and may have been one of those who heard this prophecy.

Obs. In 2 Chro. xxxii. 7, 8, when Hezekiah was standing near the spot where this prophecy was delivered, he all but quotes both Isaiah's words in *v.* 4 and the great name *Immanu-el.* "Be ye strong and courageous; *fear not*, neither be dismayed, because of the king of Assyria and of all the multitude that is with him: for with us (*'immanu*) is a Greater than is with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us (*'immanu*) is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles."

Hear ye now] Or, "Hear, I pray you" (cp. note on v. 5). Even in reproof, he uses the language of respectful courtesy.

Is it a small thing] Or, "Is it too little for you to weary out men, that ye would weary out my God also?"

Their infidelity had led Isaiah to give up the hope of doing them good. After the vision in ch. vi he remained silent, waiting for God's interference;—"wearied," as Jeremiah afterwards was (xii. 5). But He, who is "strong and patient," would work out both the promised salvation and the threatened punishment. He "fainteth not, neither is wearied" (xl. 28). A time might, indeed, come, when men had so abused His forbearance, that Mercy itself could no longer withhold correction (i. 14). Yet even then Mercy was not "wearied out";—it was inexhaustibly rich in resources.

Obs. In speaking to Ahaz, God had condescendingly said: "Ask of *the Lord, thy God.*" Ahaz replied distantly: "I will not tempt *the Lord;*" omitting the privileged expression "my God." The prophet now supplies the missing term: "Will ye weary out *my God?*"

14. *Therefore*] To shew that your rejection of God's guidance cannot interfere with the development of His great plan:—to prevent you from supposing that your rebellion will free you from that obligation under which His covenant has placed you, or from the probation which His revelation involves; He Himself will now give to you a Sign: He, the Lord (*Adonay*, see on vi. 8), the Supreme Judge; whose moral government holds you and all in the firmest bonds for ever.

Obs. There is a similarly weighty *Therefore* in xxviii. 16; where a most comforting promise to the faithful, and a most solemn menace to the perverse, are combined, as here.

a sign] The prediction of a future event, which at the time seemed impossible, was given to Moses as the *sign* that God had

sent him (Exod. iii. 12). Other "signs" of an immediate kind were added for the confirmation of the doubtful, or the conviction of the unbelieving; but the crowning evidence of all would be when Israel arrived at Sinai and worshipped Him whose manifested glory would enable them to say, "God is with us."

Similarly the "sign," which was now given through Isaiah, related to a future event which might seem utterly impossible,—the birth of a Divine Person from a human virgin. Other predictive signs of a subordinate kind would be afterwards given; the most immediate in viii. 1—4 (the overthrow of Rezin and Pekah), a more distant in viii. 8—10, x. 5—34 (the destruction of Sennacherib); one still more remote in xliv. 26—xlv. 4 (the capture of Babylon); but the sign *now* given was of vastly higher and deeper range: referring to that all-inclusive evidence of God's love (Rom. viii. 32), towards which the whole series of "signs" given to Israel from the time of Moses onward had been tending.

Behold, a virgin] Rather, *Behold,* **the** *virgin* **is** *with child, and* **beareth** *a Son* (cp. Gen. xvi. 11; Judg. xiii. 5). Chrysostom remarks that the article points to one who is "conspicuous and distinct" (*ἐπίσημον καὶ μόνην*).

The word rendered "virgin" is the one used of Rebekah (Gen. xxiv. 43) and of Miriam (Exod. ii. 8). The only other places where it occurs are Ps. lxviii. 25; Song of Sol. i. 3, vi. 8; Prov. xxx. 19. (See Note B.)

It is evident that no interpretation of this verse can be adequate, which does not satisfy the following conditions:—

(1) It must yield a sense, which is not unworthy of the grandeur of the offer made in *v.* 11; in other words, it must view the promised birth as supernatural.

(2) The child must be born of David's family; for so only would the birth be fitted to guarantee the perpetuity of David's house (cp. ix. 7).

(3) The child must be such that the doctrine of God's presence with Israel (so long represented by the Shekinah) shall be realized in His person.

(4) The dignity of the child must not fall short of that assigned to Him in the prophet's own expansion of the name "Immanuel" in ix. 6.

These reasonable demands have never been met by any interpretation but that which the birth of Jesus supplied (Matt. i. 22, 23; Luke i. 31—35).

"This," says Irenæus, "was the sign *in the depth and in the height.* In the depth; for He is very man: in the height; for He is very God. In the depth; for He condescended to endure not only human misery, but the dereliction of God, the abyss of death and Hades: in the height; for He took this our human nature with Him into the glory which He had before the world was."

The Incarnation was one of the "thoughts" of God which "are very deep" (Ps. xcii. 5). It as much transcends the thoughts of man as the boundless expanse of heaven transcends our earth (lv. 9). It was what, "since the beginning of the world, men had not heard, neither perceived by the ear, nor any eye, save God's, had seen" (lxiv. 4). It was a solution of the problems; How can the Holy One dwell with sinful men?—How can David's house be hurled down to the ground, and yet "the everlasting covenant" abide "ordered in all things, and sure" (2 S. xxiii. 5)?

Obs. 1. Here in this "Son" was the assurance that after the Vine of Judah was hewn down, "the Holy Seed" (vi. 13) remained the "substance thereof."

Obs. 2. The supernatural birth from "the virgin," full of consolation to the faithful, was "a sign" of a portentous kind to Ahaz. If Creative Power must interpose to make a new commencement of royalty in the family of David, must not the old line have become extinct? (Cp. Jer. xxii. 30, xxiii. 5; Ezek. xxi. 26, 27.)

Obs. 3. The parallel prophecy in Micah iv. 8—v. 3 in like manner connects the birth of the Eternal King, out of the womb of the long parturient Jewish Church (cp. ch. xxvi. 17), with the Babylonish captivity.

and shall call] So A.V. rightly. (For the grammatical form, see Deut. xxxi. 29.) The LXX, Aq., Symm., and Theod. have *καλέσεις* (probably from Gen. xvi. 11). For the fulfilment, see Luke i. 31.

his name] Cp. ix. 6, 7; Jer. xxiii. 6. This should be His distinctive title.

Immanuel] The proper rendering is given in viii. 10; "*God is with us:*"—*μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός.*

To see the full force of the words, we must go back to the "House of God" in Gen. xxviii, and the "Mount of God" in Exod. xxxiii.

(*a*) When Jacob went forth, the solitary heir of Abraham's blessing, he heard the voice of God saying to him in a dream; "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed, and in thy seed: and, behold, I am WITH THEE." (Gen. xxviii. 14, 15; cp. 20.) That presence of God with him was symbolized by the "stairs" set on earth, whose top reached to heaven;—unquestionably a type of the Incarnation (John i. 51).

Obs. It was added: "I will not *forsake thee* (*s. w. a.* ch. vi. 12), until I have done what I have spoken to thee." So now, although the land should be "forsaken" (vi. 12), Israel was not. God would be with the true "Seed of Abraham," even when

they passed through the "fire" and "water" of His sore judgments (xliii. 2, "*I am with thee*").

(*b*) After the nation had been spared at Horeb, on the intercession of Moses, God still spoke of withdrawing His Presence from them. Moses thereupon prayed: "If *Thy Presence* go not, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here, that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? is it not in that THOU goest WITH US (*'immanu*)?"

No created angel would satisfy the longings of Moses:—none but the "Angel of God's Presence" (ch. lxiii. 9, cp. Exod. xxiii. 21); He, who, being the "Captain of the Lord's Host" in Josh. v. 13—15, was in Josh. vi. 1—16 the Lord Himself, whose presence was symbolized outwardly by the Ark of the Covenant.

Obs. The Lord had said to Joshua (i. 9; cp. 5), "The Lord thy God is WITH THEE, *whithersoever thou goest*" (the words of Gen. xxviii. 15).

The "stairs," on which the angels of God ascended and descended, and the Ark of the Covenant surmounted by the mercy-seat and cherubim of glory, were both symbols and pledges of the Covenant of Grace to be established in the person of the Virgin's Son; who was the One link between heaven and earth.

This is the direct and primary force of the name, *Immanu-el*.

That there is a further sense, inferentially deducible from this, is certain; and it is of importance to notice it; yet that sense, however practically momentous, is in its nature *secondary*. "God is WITH US; therefore, He will *help us*:"—such is the argument of faith. See 2 Chro. xxxii. 8. Cp. Judg. vi. 13; 1 K. viii. 57; 2 Chro. xiii. 12, xv. 2 (in *three* of which passages "with us" is contrasted with "forsake us"). But this secondary sense cannot *take the place* of the first; for it is founded upon it:—as much as the ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν of Rom. viii. 31 is founded upon the τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο of *v.* 32.

Obs. 1. Matt. i. 21—23 speaks of the prophetic name "Immanuel" as verified in JESUS, "the Saviour;" and the chapter, in which this "Book of Immanuel" (chh. vii—xii) culminates, has YESHUAH,—"Salvation,"—in each of its first three verses (xii. 1, 2, 3).

Obs. 2. The Gospel, which in its first chapter quotes the prophecy of the birth of Him whose name is μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός, has in its last verse the words, καὶ ἰδού, ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας (cp. Rev. xxi. 3).

Obs. 3. A comparison of *v.* 1 with 2 Chro. xiii. 12, xxxii. 8, seems to warrant the conclusion that the failure of Pekah and Rezin in their attack on Jerusalem was a present and visible sealing of the truth signified by the name, "Immanuel."

15. This Divine Child should be a true human infant; fed with the produce of the land, which "flowed with milk and honey." (Cp. *v.* 22.)

that he may know] Vulg. *ut sciat*:—a rendering which is supported by the use of the word in Deut. viii. 2, &c. (quoted below).

The words rendered "*refuse*" and "*choose*" are constantly used of moral or spiritual reprobation and approval (see below).

In iii. 1 the prophet had foretold the withdrawal of the "whole stay of bread" and "of water" from the disobedient people;—the spiritual nourishment of God's word. But this Child should feed on all the rich stores of covenant blessing;—the "butter and honey" of God's Church. (Cp. Song of Sol. iv. 11; Ps. xix. 10; 1 Pet. ii. 2.)

The work to be effected by this Child is then pointed out. His presence among men (like God's presence, of old, with Israel) was "to try them, *to know* (*s.w.*) what was in their hearts, whether they would love the Lord their God" (Deut. viii. 2, xiii. 3; Judg. iii. 4; and note especially 2 Chro. xxxii. 31). The Incarnation did in a far higher degree what God's descent on Horeb had in some measure done:—it established *a sign* for the probation of the people among whom it was erected; for the reprobation of the evil and the approval of the good.

They who *refused* (or, "rejected") the good Law of God (*v.* 24, viii. 6, xxx. 12; Lev. xxvi. 43; *s. w.*) and *chose* their own evil ways (i. 29, lxv. 12, lvi. 3, 4) gave evidence of their character; so that the Judge "*knew*" to reject them (Lev. xxvi. 44; Ps. lxxxix. 39; Hos. iv. 6, ix. 11; Jer. xiv. 19; Lam. v. 22; *s. w.*).

They who "rejected" their idols (xxxi. 7) and unjust gain (xxxiii. 15), and "chose" that in which God had pleasure (lvi. 4), were manifested to be good; and the Judge "*knew*" to approve them; they were the "Israel whom He chose" (xliv. 1, 2, xlviii. 10).

This sifting process would be intensified by the coming of Immanuel.

When "the child Jesus" (Luke ii. 27—35) was taken into the temple, it was declared of Him that He was "set for the fall and uprising of many in Israel, and for A SIGN to be spoken against...*that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed*."

Obs. The Incarnation gave scope for the highest degree of human probation; because it made possible that wondrous realization of the Divine Law,—love to God and love to man,—which is visible in the life and death of Christ. He "refused the evil,"—even when it was presented to Him in the form of universal empire (Matt. iv. 8); He "chose

that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

16 For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

17 ¶ The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; *even* the king of Assyria.

18 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall hiss for the

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the good,"—even when it was surrounded with the horrors of the "hour of darkness" (Matt. xxvi. 42, 53).

16. That great Birth, which would be a sign for all ages, began its work of probation immediately from the time when it was foretold in this vivid manner by Isaiah. It was a sign to the "house of David" now. Eventually "Immanuel" in person would take cognizance of the state of His people. But before that final manifestation of character should have taken place, His "love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity" would be exhibited by His bringing about the "forsaking" which had already been foretold in vi. 12.

Obs. Isaiah's own ministry hastened on the arrival of the period, in which another great prophet divided Israel into two parts; "the good, *very good*" and "the evil, *very evil*" (Jer. xxiv. 1—3).

the land that] Or, "the ground" (*s. w. a.* vi. 11).

For determining the meaning of the whole clause it should be borne in mind,

(1) That the "land" is plainly the same as in vi. 11.

(2) That the "forsaking" must be as in vi. 12, xxvii. 10, and in Lev. xxvi. 43 (probably here referred to); "The land also shall be *left* of them...because they *rejected* my judgments."

It can, therefore, only be the land of Israel that is intended. (There is no such land as "Ephraim-Syria.") The two kings are exactly those to which the next verse carries our thoughts. Both these kings are now (by Ahaz's defection) alike "*kings of the earth*" (xxiv. 21).

The exact rendering of the Hebrew would appear to run thus; "Forsaken shall be the land, as to which thou art in alarm, because of her two kings." A comparison of xvii. 9 makes it probable that the last clause, "because of her two kings," is to be referred to the verb "forsaken."

Each king was scheming, how to supplant the other. Both were acting in a spirit of rebellion against God. Ahaz meant to overwhelm Ephraim by help of Assyria; Ephraim to secularize Judah by help of Syria. It was "sherd of earth striving with sherd of earth" (xlv. 9). Both of them should be broken in pieces by the strong Rod (Ps. cx. 2) of Zion's King.

17. Here we seem to have the most secret thoughts of Ahaz revealed. Did Ahaz flatter himself that by transferring his allegiance from "the Lord of Hosts" to the king of Assyria he might recover the northern tribes, and revive the glory of the days of Solomon?

God was in very deed bringing upon David's house days such as had never yet been since the schism:—that was true. And Asshur was really his predestinated instrument;—this also was true.

Obs. 1. Ewald ('H. of Isr.,' IV. p. 151) has pointed out how marked the contrast was between the Assyrian monarchy in the 8th century before Christ and any other that had existed up to that time. "Already in those early times the Assyrian people displayed the greatest affinity in the arts of war and empire to the Romans; just as it began the Universal Empire, which the Romans consummated."

Obs. 2. From the time of Ahaz's defection onward, Judah fell under the power of heathen empires; Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The commencement of this subjection dates from the rejection of Isaiah's promise of Immanuel; and its consummation was witnessed by the children of those who rejected Immanuel Himself.

the king of Assyria] The words come in at the end of the sentence with great emphasis; as if meant to produce a surprise, like that of *v.* 6: proving that the prophet was well acquainted with the king's (probably, as yet private) negotiations.

The shock seems to have produced no effect on those "heavy ears." Possibly, Ahaz even extracted material for encouragement out of the prophet's words.

18—25. These eight verses are an expansion of *v.* 17: pointing out what the condition of the vineyard would be, when its fence began to be removed. The triple occurrence of "thorns and briars" (*vv.* 23, 24, 25) is of itself sufficient to carry us back to v. 1—7.

18. Egypt abounds in flies of various kinds: and bee-keeping is an established trade in Assyria to the present day. The fly and the bee aptly symbolized the two powers between which Israel lay. The attacks of Egypt were desultory, yet destructive;—ruinous, indeed, as those of a *Vastatrix* insect on a vineyard. Those of Assyria were made by hosts that were well-disciplined, well-armed,

fly that *is* in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria.

19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all ‖ bushes.

‖ Or, *commendable trees.*

20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a [d]razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.

[d] 2 Kin. 19. 35.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep;

22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk *that* they shall

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and intent on carrying out schemes of practical utility.

shall hiss for] Cp. v. 26. He will call them as to a definite mark.

The power of Israel, while they were faithful to the covenant, had been terrible as "the hornet" which went before them (Exod. xxiii. 28). Now it should sink alternately in submission to the "fly" of Egypt and the "bee" of Assyria.

in the uttermost part of the rivers] Or, simply; **at the end of**... The "rivers of Egypt" are those of the Delta: and near the apex of the Delta was the metropolis of Egypt. Yet there may be a reference to the fact that *Ethiopia* was now, apparently, working great political changes in Egypt. For *So* (2 K. xvii. 4) is held to have been an Ethiopian (=Sabako), and Tirhakah certainly was such (xxxvii. 9).

Obs. 1. Hoshea, the last king of Israel, was deported by Shalmaneser because he had made a secret league with So, king of Egypt; and Nebuchadnezzar's determination to carry Judah away to Babylon was brought about by Pharaoh-Nechoh's occupation of Palestine and Syria (2 K. xxiii. 29, xxiv. 16).

Obs. 2. That Egypt's influence, from the time of Solomon onward, should have corroded Israel's inward strength, was the fault of man:—its action in precipitating the fall of the two kingdoms was a part of God's providential retribution on sin; and overruled by Him to good. The Assyrian armies also were providential agents;—employed to carry off from the hills of Canaan sweet honey, which should "enlighten the eyes" (1 S. xiv. 29) of fainting humanity.

19. Those vast swarms would obey the call; and cover the God-forsaken vineyard. They would settle upon *the valleys of the* **waste spots** (cp. v. 6; nearly *s. w.*); upon *the* **crevices** *of the rocks* (only here and in Jer. xvi. 16), in which the silly dove that left her own impregnable Rock (Song of Sol. ii. 14; cp. Jer. xlix. 16) had taken refuge; upon *the thorns* (or "prickly lotus;" only here and lv. 13), which now were so abundant; and upon *the bushes*, or, "spiny thickets" (here only). It is noticed that "there are at least eighteen Hebrew words used to express different kinds of prickly shrubs or weeds" in the Bible; and that Palestine, from "the combined heat and dryness of its climate" and the rockiness of its surface, has a peculiar "tendency to form thorns even in groups where we should least expect them." (Dr Tristram, 'N. H. B.' p. 423.)

Obs. Ch. lv. 13, the only other place where the "prickly lotus" is mentioned, helps to suggest the right view of the figurative language here made use of. Cp. xxxii. 13.

20. *with a razor that is hired*] Rather, *with* **the** *hired razor*. Ahaz had resolved to hire it.—Be it so.—He "should bear the expense: but another hand than his should employ it" (Duguet). See x. 5, 6, 12. Cp. also Ezek. v. 1—9, xxix. 18, 19.

beyond the river] The Euphrates. There the razor was; and thither would it sweep away the hair:—beyond the limits of the land of promise (Gen. xv. 18).

it shall also consume] Or, "sweep away" (*s. w. a.* Gen. xviii. 23, 24: cp. xix. 15, 17).

The figure is explained by a reference to the ceremonial of purification. The leper, who was to be "cleansed," was to shave his head, his beard, his eyebrows, "and all his hair" (Lev. xiv. 9). The Nazirite, who, in consequence of some one's having died suddenly near him, had "defiled his consecrated head," was to shave his head (Num. vi. 9). The Levites, for their purification (from their contact with the dead, Exod. xxxii. 28, 29), were to "make a razor pass over all their flesh" (Num. viii. 7).

The Nazirite nation had been defiled (vi. 5). "From the sole of the foot even unto the head" (i. 5) leprosy-marks had been seen in it;—pride, luxury, oppression, infidelity. Before the people could be re-admitted (after repentance) to outward communion with the Holy One, the whole body must be shaven,—head, beard, and feet;—royalty, priesthood, and national independence swept away.

21, 22. Yet when the invader carried off his prey, Israel was still (as ever) ruled and tended by its own true "King." "*A man* should be...a covert from the tempest" (xxxii. 2); and should maintain his household (figured by Shear-yashuv) in peace and plenty.

give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left † in the land.

† Heb. *in the midst of the land.*

23 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall *even* be for briers and thorns.

24 With arrows and with bows shall *men* come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

25 And *on* all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

He would reserve a milch-cow for food, and a couple of sheep for clothing, and the land itself would flow (as in olden time) with honey,—yea, with Gospel honey out of the flinty rock of the Sinaitic Law. And so "every one that was left (*s. w. a.* i. 8, iv. 3; 1 K. xix. 10, 14) in the midst of the land (vi. 12)" would eat the same kind of food as the infant Immanuel ate:—becoming as little children, that they might enjoy the blessings of His Kingdom.

23. In v. 6 it had been proclaimed that the vineyard of the Well-beloved should no more "be pruned nor hoed; but there should come up briers and thorns upon it." This is now repeated, and (it would seem) with another allusion to the passage in Solomon's Song, which was there referred to.

Each of the keepers of Solomon's vineyard was to "bring a thousand silverlings for the fruit" of his allotment (Song of Sol. viii. 11).

The prophet here adds a new touch to the allegorical picture:—the 1000 shekels were the rent of 1000 vines. This implies that these plots of vine-land were very choice ones; since vines are ordinarily let at a piastre (2½*d.*) apiece; and a shekel is 2*s.* 3*d.*

But *every place*, that was once so rich and well-cultured, shall now, for the negligence of its keepers, be left to the tendencies of nature;—shall be *given up to those briers and thorns*, which, since the fall, humanity unrestrained by divine grace has always brought forth; the thorns, which "choke the word and make it unfruitful" (Mark iv. 19). When these get possession of men's souls (making men to be worthless thorns, 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7), they produce the outward "thorns" of social oppression and wrong-doing (v. 8 ff.). And these call forth the "thorns" of God's just retribution;—the "sharp arrows" of invading hosts. So, then, the vineyard is to be given up to Assyrian battalions.

24. *With arrows and with bows shall men come thither*] "Their arrows sharp, their bows bent" (v. 28). The verb here is in the singular; as in *v.* 26 of the Vineyard chapter.

because...] Or, **for the whole** *land shall* **be** *thorns and briers;*—bristling with those serried ranks of troops; as impenetrable as a jungle of Paliurus.

all the land] And yet, they should not be able to reach every part of it; for it follows—

25. *And on all hills...*] Or, **But (as for)** *all the* **mountains** *which shall be* **hoed with the hoe, the fear of brier and thorn shall not come thither.** The verb rendered "hoed," occurring nowhere else in the Bible except in v. 6, carries our minds necessarily to that passage. So the verse would seem to refer to times preceding the total desolation of the vineyard by the Chaldean invasion. There were yet some holy mountains remaining under "God's husbandry," tilled by the men who were "workers together with Him" (1 Cor. iii. 9). Since these have hoed out the moral weeds, the punitive sentence, so far as regards them, is rescinded. The "fear of brier and thorn" cannot come to them. Hezekiah will be confident that, although "the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations," yet Jehovah is the only God, and that He rules over all the earth. And Isaiah will say of the terror-inspiring king of Assyria, "He *shall not come* unto this city, *nor shoot an arrow* there."

Obs. 1. Though this "dark speech" may have been misunderstood and misapplied by Ahaz, it is probable (as was suggested above) that one stood there listening to it, who drank in its true meaning.

What, indeed, was that laborious Paschal purification of Hezekiah's but the "hoeing" of the vineyard of Zion (2 Chro. xxix. 5, 16, xxx. 14, xxxi. 1)? What but that, with the careful and devoted labours of Isaiah, turned back the sword of the destroyer (cp. 2 Chro. xxx. 27)?

Obs. 2. In the account of Hezekiah's passover (2 Chro. xxx. 26) it is said: "Since the time of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem."

That energetic exercise of penitence, faith, and love had power to divest Isaiah's words, in *v.* 17 above, of their deeply threatening character: so that, when "the king of Assyria" came up against Jerusalem, his attack served only to surround Jerusalem with a glory and sanctity such as it had not pos-

sessed "since the day when Ephraim departed from Judah."

Isaiah's word, like Immanuel's, developed the "thoughts of men's hearts;" whether for reprobation or approval.

but it shall be] The subject is, "the thorn and brier." That mighty mass of desolating agency shall be so utterly consumed, that the animals which are the types of gentleness shall pasture where it had stood, and shall tread down its ashes.

Cp. xxvi. 6, "The foot shall *tread it down* (*s.w.*); the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy."

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 11.)

The Vulgate (after Aq., Symm., Theod.) renders, "in profundum inferni:" as if the pointing were שְׁאֹלָה. This gives an apparent increase of strength to the first clause: but really weakens the effect of the two contrasted verbs. It also requires us to assign a force to למעלה (in order to preserve the antithesis) which it does not possess. (See, for instance, viii. 21, xxxvii. 31.)

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 14.)

THE WORD עלמה.

It is well known that Aq., Symm. and Theod. departed here from the rendering of the LXX, ἡ *πάρθενος*, and substituted ἡ *νεᾶνις*:—a term which may be applied to a young married woman; and therefore is not a proper equivalent for עַלְמָה: since (as Mr Cheyne remarks) "the word is limited by its usage in the Old Testament to the unmarried woman."

In Gen. xxiv. 43, Aquila translated the word by *ἀπόκρυφος*; deriving it from עָלַם, to "hide;"—a possible etymology, though the masculine עֶלֶם is more easily explained through the Chaldee עְלַם, to "be strong."

Our English word "maiden" comes as near, probably, as any to the Hebrew word.

The Jews appeal to Prov. xxx. 19 to prove that the word might be used of one not a virgin.

Even if we should take the passage in a literal sense, this no way follows. (See at large in Hengstenberg's 'Christol.') But, in fact, the two chapters, Prov. xxx and xxxi (both of them headed מַשָּׂא), are evidently full of allegory.

The use of the word גֶּבֶר in Jer. xxxi. 22 (cp. Job iii. 3, A. V. "man-child"), of a man-child supernaturally conceived, points out the genuine meaning of the passage;—the mystery of "the way of a man-child in a maiden;" with which in the next verse is contrasted that "mystery of iniquity," of which so strange an example is recorded in 2 S. xi. 4.

The first verse of Prov. xxx contains twice over the name *Ithiel*, "God is with me;" a yet stricter designation of the *θεάνθρωπος* than "Immanuel" (see John viii. 29, xvi. 32). Then in *v.* 4 we read (in the very style of Isaiah), "Who hath ascended into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in His fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what His Son's name, if thou knowest?"

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *In Maher-shalal-hash-baz, he prophesieth that Syria and Israel shall be subdued by Assyria.* 5 *Judah likewise for their infidelity.* 9 *God's judgments shall be unresistible.* 11 *Comfort shall be to them that fear God.* 19 *Great afflictions to idolaters.*

MOREOVER the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great

CHAP. VIII. The prophetic Sign set forth in the last chapter—so mysteriously great, and yet so conformable to all the past revelations of God's will—was sufficient for the re-assurance of the faithful. If God would *thus* dwell with men, in a Temple of flesh—if this was to be the way in which He would fulfil His wondrous oath to David — then they need have no fear. To the eye of faith, Canaan was Immanuel's own land (viii. 8). Whatever He ordained for it, must be right.

Yet for the doubters or the unbelievers a further prophetic sign was given, of a different kind: one that would admit of being verified in its historical aspect within two or three years. Being proclaimed with the greatest publicity, it at once placed king and people upon their probation; forcing them to entertain the question, "Shall we continue to look to Assyria, for help to extricate us out of our difficulties? or shall we trust Isaiah's word, and believe that God is Himself about to employ Assyria for the chastisement of Rezin and Pekah?"

roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning † Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

3 And I † went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

4 For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, ‖ the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

5 ¶ The LORD spake also unto me again, saying,

6 Forasmuch as this people re-

† Heb. *in making speed to the spoil he hasteneth the prey*, or, *make speed, &c.*

† Heb. *approached unto.*

‖ Or, *he that is before the king of Assyria shall take away the riches, &c.*

This nearer prophecy concerning Ephraim and Syria was, at the same time, followed by a warning as to the peril that would befall Judah (viii. 8), a recurrence to the fundamental promise of the Divine Child (ix. 6, 7), and a bold and clear prediction of the overthrow of the Assyrian power when it should assail Jerusalem (x. 24—34).

Escape from this sign and the obligations involved in its verification was impossible.

Obs. We have a remarkable parallel to the two prophetic announcements of chh. vii and viii in Jer. xxxi, xxxii.

1. *a great roll*] Rather, **a large tablet**: of wood or metal, covered with a smooth surface of wax; which, when written upon, was hung up in public for all to read. (Cp. Jer. xxxii. 11, 14.)

with a man's pen]—the pen of a "frail man" (*enosh*, Ps. viii. 4); such as might be used in chronicling the incidents of ordinary life. For the name is to be that of a simply human child; and though this shall have its own higher significance (*v.* 18), yet its primary reference will be to a passing event of human history.

concerning] Rather, the words to be written on the tablet were, "**For** *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*" (cp. Ezek. xxxvii. 16). The name meant, "Plunder speedeth (Zeph. i. 14), spoil hasteth" (cp. on v. 19).

Until the birth and naming of the child, the tablet would keep men's minds in a state of suspense; preparing them to receive so much deeper impression from the explanation when it came.

Obs. As in Jer. xxxii. 11, 14 there is both an "open" document and a "sealed;" so here in *vv.* 1—4 we have the "open" testimony, and in the following verses (viii. 5, ix. 7) the "sealed." Cp. on *v.* 16.

2. *And I took*] Rather, the words are God's, in continuation of the address in *v.* 1; **And I will take** *unto me.* (The construction as in Deut. xxxi. 28; the phrase as in Jer. xxxii. 10, 25, 44.)

faithful witnesses] Or, **sure** *witnesses*; whose testimony none will be able to gainsay: partly, because of their rank; but still more, it would seem, from their being adherents of Ahaz. For "Uriah the priest" can scarcely be other than the one who made the Syrian altar after the description sent him from Damascus by Ahaz (2 K. xvi. 10—16); thereby (as Mr Birks notices) furnishing incontrovertible evidence of the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction. Zechariah may have been Ahaz's own father-in-law, 2 Chro. xxix. 1.

3. As one was at length born in whom that mysterious title received its interpretation, so in due time would that Great Name, Immanuel, be fully justified.

Since Ahaz had been king some time before the interview in ch. vii, we can scarcely place the writing of the tablet earlier than the second year of Ahaz. The birth of the child, therefore, may be assigned to the third of Ahaz.

4. This child, which says, "*My father and my mother*," stands in marked contrast with the Son of the Virgin.

An infant may lisp the words "father" and "mother" in its second year. As Pekah was assassinated in the fourth year of Ahaz (2 K. xv. 30), Tiglath-pileser's invasion of Samaria and Damascus (where Rezin was slain, 2 K. xv. 29, xvi. 9) probably belongs to the early part of the fourth of Ahaz.

5. *spake also*] Lit. "added yet to speak." What follows (as in vii. 10 f.) belongs to the higher range of prophecy. In fact, the section viii. 5—ix. 7 reverts to, and expands, the promise of "Immanuel."

6. Let not Ahaz think that this sentence against the two hostile kings applied to them only. They had plotted against the representative of David's royal house; but what if David's own heir had been, with deeper guilt, conspiring "against the LORD and against His Anointed" (Ps. ii. 2)?

this people refuseth] Or, **hath rejected** (*s.w.a.* v. 24). The expression "this people" seems here to refer especially to Judah (as in vi. 9).

Ephraim has been already doomed (vii. 8). The policy of Ahaz is what now requires to be exposed; that so Judah as a whole may be warned, and the faithful remnant in it comforted.

The policy of Pekah and Rezin was, open and avowed hostility to the Davidic throne.

fuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, *even* the

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The policy of Ahaz was at least as hostile to it really; though, on the surface, it might seem calculated to give it stability.

the waters of Shiloah] The fountain of Shiloah (or, Siloam), at the mouth of the Tyropœan Valley and so at the roots of both Zion and Moriah, is fed with water which flows through a narrow subterranean conduit (according to Dr Robinson, 1750 feet long) from the "Pool of the Virgin." This last is on the rocky slope of Ophel, about 300 yards south of the middle point of the southern wall of the Haram. (See Isaac Taylor's note to Traill's 'Josephus,' p. cxv: cp. also pp. lvii—lxii.) Both these pools are intermittent; ebbing and flowing irregularly, sometimes once or twice a day:—a fact which inclined Dr Robinson to suppose the upper of them to be the same with Bethesda.

The water in the "Pool of the Virgin" comes through a tunnel from reservoirs deep in the rock on which the temple stood. How these reservoirs are supplied is not certainly known. It may be from the rain-fall only. Tacitus's words, "Templum in modum arcis, *fons perennis aquæ*, cavati sub terrâ montes, et piscinæ cisternæque servandis imbribus" ('Hist.' v. 12), tend to confirm the tradition that "a copious natural spring rises deep within the temple enclosure" (I. Taylor, as above). Anyhow, the fact that Jerusalem was well supplied with water is certain. Strabo (ib. p. lviii) speaks of Jerusalem as "ἐντὸς μὲν εὔυδρον, ἐκτὸς δὲ παντελῶς διψηρόν;" and William of Tyre (ib. p. lxii) mentions that while the Crusaders "suffered incredible hardships during the siege" from want of water, the besieged always had an abundant supply. (Cp. below, on xxii. 11.) The city "reared among limestone mountains,—scarcely blessed, within a circuit of many miles, with so many as two or three natural springs,—this central point, as it is, of drought, —has from age to age known no thirst within its walls" (ib. p. lxi). Cp. on xxv. 5, xxxii. 2.

These waters of Shiloah, the sacred waters that came forth from the Holy Mountain, seemed poor and ignoble in comparison with the Abana and Pharpar of Syria, or the Jordan of Ephraim: how much more, then, with the Euphrates and Tigris! (Cp. Jer. ii. 13, 18.) Calm and tranquil faith in the prophetic word which God sent them (ix. 8), in the gently flowing current of His providential dealings (springing out of the depths of His eternal wisdom and goodness),—this was not to their mind. They must have something that appealed to eye and ear, that gratified the fancy with its ambitious cravings.

Obs. 1. SHILOACH means "sending," or, "what is sent." (Cp. John ix. 7.) As applied to the waters of the Pool, it probably meant, "sent off" (from the reservoir), "discharged" (through the conduit).

The verb (*shalach*) was used in vi. 8, in reference to the "mission" of Isaiah;—the appointment of one who should be the channel for conveying God's word to His people. In xlviii. 16, lxi. 1, it is applied to the "Servant of the Lord;"—the "Apostle of our profession" (Heb. iii. 1). In Syriac it supplies the name for "Apostle." In Ps. cx. 2, it is used of making the "mighty Rod," the Apostolic Church, issue forth "out of Zion."

Obs. 2. As the revelation of Christ, which was supplied by the law, was typified by the water that flowed from the rock of Horeb; so the great promise made to David's house had its symbol in the waters that flowed from the rock on which the temple was built.

Obs. 3, The nation, which had closed its eyes to God's prophetic message, and in consequence had been sentenced to blindness (vi. 10), could only be restored to sight when they washed "in the waters of Siloam:" —believing in Him to whom "all the prophets gave witness;"—Him whom God had "sent" to save the world (John iii. 17; cp. v. 24, vi. 39—44, vii. 29—33, viii. 16, 29, ix. 4, xvii. 4, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25, xx. 21); Him in whom the royalty of Sion and the priesthood of Moriah were united: Son of David, and Son of God.

that go softly] Gen. xxxiii. 14; LXX. ἡσυχῇ (cp. on vii. 4). That "meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price" (1 Pet. iii. 4), was to them a poor, despicable, thing.

Obs. The waters that flow off from the Pool of Siloam are entirely spent in irrigating a number of gardens. (Cp. Neh. iii. 15; and note on Eccl. ii. 5.)

and rejoice in Rezin] Rather, **even rejoicing with** (lxvi. 10) *Rezin.* (See Note A.) This was the surprising part of the nation's conduct. They not only slighted their birthright, but did so with a light heart; nay, mirthfully. Even the men of Judah adopted the Assyrian policy of Ahaz joyously; because it seemed to free them from servitude to God's law. Their joy was exactly that of Rezin and Pekah, "the joy of wild asses" (xxxii. 14), that had broken loose from restraint. Judah was, in fact, making common cause with its bitterest enemies; rejecting

king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks:

8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach *even* to the neck; and † the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

† Heb. *the fulness of the breadth of thy land shall be the stretchings out of his wings.*

9 ¶ Associate yourselves, O ye people, ‖ and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

‖ Or, *yet.*

10 Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the

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(and that exultingly) the gracious promise on which its national greatness depended.

Obs. 1. On the worldly mirth that got possession of the people, after Ahaz had "made Judah naked" (2 Chro. xxviii. 19, cp. Exod. xxxii. 25), see xxii. 13 (*s.w.a.* Exod. xxxii. 6), xxiv. 8, 11, xxxii. 13.

Obs. 2. The same frantic mirth prevailed when the Chaldean sword was ready to fall on them: Ezek. xi. 10 (H. 15, where the same two verbs occur).

Obs. 3. In marked antithesis to this wild mirth is the promise to the faithful Zion, in xii. 3, "*With joy* shall ye draw water out of *the wells of salvation*;" those everlasting fountains from which the peaceful waters of Shiloah flow. (See on xii. 3.)

7. Judah's preference of the worldly power of Assyria to the Invisible Power of its God should be allowed to work its own punishment.

The Euphrates overflows its banks in spring and summer, after the snows of Armenia begin to melt. "The armies of Assyria, recruited from the hardy races of the north" (Sir E. Strachey), should now in like manner overflow their usual boundaries. (Cp. xvii. 12, 13, lix. 19.)

the king of Assyria, and all his glory] This mighty one, this demigod;—in whom Ahaz trusts, more than he does in "the King, the Lord of Hosts," whose "glory" had so long dwelt in Zion and was now about to become "the fulness of the whole earth" (vi. 3).

his banks] The limits appointed to his empire by the same Hand that set bounds to the sea. Hitherto Assyria had not interfered with the southern kingdom. It is remarked by Ewald ('H. of Isr.' iv. p. 167), that "the Assyrians themselves seem to have entertained a certain dread of the power" of Judah; and "kept out of the circle of its movements and its wars; while they had for a long time interfered in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes."

8. *And he shall pass through Judah*] Rather, *he shall* **sweep down** (lit. "change," —namely, his course) **against** *Judah;* as a swollen stream forcing for itself a new channel, and advancing to a point which it had not previously approached. The word may refer to a change of mind and feeling. (Hab. i. 11.)

even to the neck] Cp. xxx. 28, (Hab. iii. 13).

It could not reach the *head;* for (1) Jerusalem would be above that raging tide of Assyrian invasion, when all else was submerged; and (2) when Jerusalem fell, the Head was still seated on the Everlasting Throne.

Obs. 1. The "neck" is often spoken of as that on which the "yoke" of servitude rested: "The yoke of my transgressions is bound by His hand; they are wreathed, they are come up *upon my neck*" (Lam. i. 14; cp. Deut. xxviii. 48; Jer. xxx. 7—9).

That this is here alluded to, is made probable by x. 27 (cp. lii. 2). Compare Note B.

Obs. 2. In Song of Sol. iv. 4, the neck of the Bride is "as the tower of David." At the captivity the yoke was laid on that stately neck.

Now then let Judah contemplate what "the glory" of Assyria will do for them. So long as they were loyal to the Covenant, the "Wings" which were symbolized by those of the cherubim of glory over the mercy-seat were spread over the land (cp. Ruth ii. 11, 12; Ps. xci. 4, and Note B below), protecting and blessing. How was it now, when the Assyrian vulture was spreading his dark, oppressive, wings (a dismal yoke) upon the "full breadth of the land"? (Cp. Note B.)

The faithful knew that the land was even then safe; for it was "Immanuel's." He was "King" at the old deluge; and He "remained a King for ever" (Ps. xxix. 10).

Obs. In Lev. xxv. 23 God says: "The land is MINE." Cp. Hos. ix. 3; Jer. ii. 7.

9. In that Name is the pledge of Zion's victory over all enemies;—Syria and Ephraim, on the one hand, Assyria and carnal Judah, on the other.

Associate yourselves, O peoples] A., S., Th. συναθροίσθητε. Similarly Targ. and Vulg.: and this agrees well with the parallel clause. Others; "Disquiet yourselves:" or, "Raise the war-cry."

broken in pieces] *s. w. a.* vii. 8 (of Ephraim), xx. 5 (of those who depended on Egypt), xxx. 31, xxxi. 9 (of Assyria), xxxvii. 27 (of the nations subjugated by Assyria).

10. *Take counsel together*] Or, "Think out your plan."

word, and it shall not stand: for God *is* with us.

11 ¶ For the LORD spake thus to me †with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying,

12 Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them to* whom this people shall

† Heb. *in strength of hand.*

it shall come to nought] Cp. xxviii. 18.

speak the word] Or, "utter your sentence."

God is with us] Hebr. *'immanu-el.* (See on vii. 14.)

11. The strong assurance which the prophet has, that God will be "with" His people, to uphold them, if needful, against the world in arms, requires to be accounted for. Naturally as much inclined to the fear of man as others, how had he gained this strange confidence, this boldness of speech?

It was by a special gift from Him who had endued Moses with the like unflinching courage. *The LORD spake to me*, he says—

with a strong hand] Lit. "with strength of the hand:" of that Mighty Hand, which knows how to rebuke the agitations of man's soul and to strengthen his spirit. It was the same power that had wrought in, and by, Moses. See Deut. xxxiv. 10—12: "*In all the signs and wonders* (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 18 below), which the Lord sent (*shalach*) him to do,... and in all that *strong hand*, and in all that great fear (*s. w. a.* in *vv.* 12, 13 here), which Moses wrought before all Israel."

Since the time of the Vision in ch. vi the Sinaitic dispensation was virtually defunct. He whose "strength of hand" Moses had seen (Exod. xiii. 3, 14) when he sang, "The Lord shall reign for ever" (xv. 18), had now appeared to Isaiah in kingly glory; and had sent him to be His apostle and ambassador to Israel, to proclaim His approaching advent as "Redeemer" (lix. 20).

To herald the coming of the virgin-born "Immanuel," was Isaiah's great and awe-inspiring office. Henceforth that revelation formed part, almost, of his personality. That great God-given Sign (vii. 14) was so firmly held to by him, that it became identified with him "before all Israel." His faith seemed to embody that Sign. To his purged vision, Immanuel was already born (ix. 6). The land was Immanuel's land (*v.* 8). All the nations of the world banded together could not hinder the event to which he had given witness. To prove that, it was only necessary to mention the name *Immanuel* (*v.* 10).

Obs. 1. In v. 25 he had spoken of God's Hand as "stretched out" to perform a great work.

Obs. 2. The inward strength of spirit thus communicated made him strong to resist his own countrymen. That this lies in the words, is evident from Ezek. iii. 7—14.

Obs. 3. But the ultimate purpose of that Hand's being put forth was to work out a purpose relating to "*all nations*." For indeed it was the same "Hand that was on the throne of the Lord" (Exod. xvii. 16, marg.), to fight the battles of the true Israel on its way to the Holy Land, "from generation to generation."

Obs. 4. We have here an explanation of the wonderful influence, which Isaiah undeniably exercised (see Note C) on the men of his time.

and instructed me]—with loving correction; for so the word implies. See Deut. viii. 6. (Cp. on xxviii. 26.)

in the way of this people] who preferred "the stubbornness of their own heart," with all its attendant misery, to walking in God's way with holy tranquillity of faith. Cp. lvii. 17; Jer. xi. 8, xiii. 10.

Obs. When Moses desired to "know whom" God would "*send with him*," he prayed, "Shew me now *Thy way*" (Exod. xxxiii. 12, 13).

12. The words are God's; addressed to Isaiah and to those who looked for guidance from the standard which he had lifted up. How far the address extends, is not agreed. The Masoretes make a break at the end of *v.* 15; others after *v.* 16; others again after *v.* 18. (See on *v.* 16.)

Say ye not] Rather, **Ye shall not say.** It is a solemn injunction.

A confederacy] Rather, **Treason.** It is not applied to kings (as Pekah and Rezin) forming an alliance; but only to such as conspire against their legitimate sovereign (2 S. xv. 12, of Absalom; cp. 1 K. xvi. 20; 2 K. xi. 14, xii. 20, &c.). It is indeed used of Hoshea's negotiating an alliance with So, king of Egypt; but only because this was an act of rebellion against Assyria. "The king of Assyria found *conspiracy* in Hoshea" (2 K. xvii. 4).

to all them to whom...] Rather, **concerning everything of which** *this people* **saith, Treason.**

They called the men, who would not be disloyal to "their God and King" (see on *v.* 21), traitors to their country. No longer having the comfort of knowing that "the Lord of Hosts was *with them*" (Ps. xlvi. 7, 11), they became timorous and suspicious of their fellow-men.

Would not such persons be apt to charge Isaiah with treason, if he denounced the Assyrian alliance, or if he warned them to "flee from coming wrath"?

The real traitors were the "men of Judah"

say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let* him *be* your fear, and *let* him *be* your dread.

14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for [a] a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[a] chap. 28. 16. Luke 2. 34. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 8.

themselves (Jer. xi. 9, *s. w.*), and the prophets who encouraged them (Ezek. xxii. 25, *s. w.*).

Obs. 1. A remarkable illustration of this verse is supplied by 2 K. xi.—When Athaliah supposed that she had "destroyed all the seed-royal," the heir of David's throne was preserved alive, "hidden in the house of the Lord" (*vv.* 3, 4). In due time, the high-priest called around him some loyal officers, and "shewed them *the king's son:*" after which he "brought him forth," and "gave unto him *the crown and the testimony*," and "anointed" him. The queen coming in, and seeing this, "cried out, *Treason, Treason*" (*s. w.*). To the traitoress loyalty was treason.

Obs. 2. There is said to be a popular tradition (M. Joanne, 'Itin. de l'Orient,' p. 806) that the place, where Isaiah was put to death by Manasseh for having said that he had "*seen the Lord*," is marked by an old mulberry-tree not far from the *Pool of Siloam.*

neither fear ye] Num. xiv. 9; Deut. i. 29 (cp. ib. 21).

nor be afraid] *Nor be* in dread; *s. w. a.* in next verse, and in xxix. 23 (where it is in parallelism with "sanctify"). This form of the verb occurs nowhere else. The derived adjective, "terrible," occurs in xiii. 11, xxv. 3, 4, 5, xxix. 5, 20, xlix. 25.

The faithless went about, picturing to themselves this or that "terrible one;" instead of fearing Him, who could at any moment "lay low the haughtiness of the terrible ones."

13. *Sanctify...*] Lit. "The Lord of Hosts, Him shall ye sanctify." Those *sanctified* Him, who, by relying on His word, proved their belief in His abiding holiness (cp. Ps. xxii. 3), whatever dangers might come upon them. Impatience imputes to God some defect of wisdom or power or righteousness; and therefore detracts from the reverence due to His holiness. Hence it is said in Num. xx. 12: "Ye *believed me not* to *sanctify* me in the eyes of the children of Israel."

Obs. St Peter is enforcing the duty of patient faith when he quotes Isai. viii. 12, 13:—τὸν Κύριον θεὸν ἁγιάσατε (Lachm. and Tisch. τὸν Κ. Χριστὸν: Syr. "moro Meshicho"), 1 Pet. iii. 15.

let him be] Or, He is. The duty rests upon the fact (cp. Deut. x. 21).

14. *be shall be for a sanctuary*] Or, *He shall* be (or, become) a *sanctuary.* Not only will He dwell among you in a sanctuary; but He will *be* Himself a sanctuary:—which was fulfilled when "the Word became flesh" (John i. 14: cp. ii. 21; Col. ii. 9).

The "sanctuary" was, above all, a fountain of sanctification: but they who partook of its sanctifying influence found in it calmness of faith and love (Ps. lxxiii. 17 f.), and a secure retreat from enemies (Ps. xxvii. 5, xxxi. 20; cp. ch. iv. 5, 6).

but for a stone of stumbling] against which they, who are walking proudly in their own way (*v.* 11), will strike their foot (Ps. xci. 11, 12) and fall.

Obs. 1. As the promise of Immanuel tended to deepen the piety and constancy of the faithful; so it gave occasion for the "disobedient" to display their unbelief more decidedly. They demanded some immediate and visible exaltation of Israel. They would not wait for God's power and wisdom to work out His own plan: but entered into fatal alliances with worldly powers.

Obs. 2. As the rejection of the Son of the Virgin, when offered to them in prophecy, precipitated the fall of the first temple; so the rejection of Christ Himself brought on the fall of the second (Matt. xxiii. 38). In condemning Christ, they "destroyed that temple" on Moriah.

a rock of offence] Their worldliness was alike offended by the lowliness of the Son of Man, and the elevation of the Son of God. They did not wish to have "God with them." They would have preferred to be left alone to work out their own policy. So "the Rock of their salvation" (Deut. xxxii. 15, 18) cast them off (ib. 19).

Obs. As the "stone" may point to the stone of Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 11—22),—the memorial of the homeless heir of promise, who typified One that "had not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20, cp. John i. 51): so the "rock" reminds us of the rock of Mount Moriah,—symbol of Him who was "the Rock of Ages," on which the Church is built.

to both the houses of Israel] We nowhere else read of "two *houses of Israel;*" though frequently of "the house of Israel and the house of Judah." It is only after the northern kingdom had been overthrown, that Judah, as the representative of Israel, is sometimes addressed under the title "house of Israel."

It would seem certain, then, that the expression was here used with some special reference.

May not this be to the fact that each kingdom rested its claims to unity on a sacred

15 And many among them shall [b] stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

17 And I will wait upon the LORD,

[b] Matth. 21. 44. Luke 20. 18.

house,—at Bethel and at Jerusalem; whilst now the temple was to Ahaz neither more nor less than Bethel had all along been to the kings of Israel, an engine of secular policy? Both "houses," therefore, must be alike overthrown. He whom they rejected would overrule the policy of each to its ruin.

15. *And many among them...*] Or, *many shall* **stumble thereon**; see Jer. vi. 21 (cp. xxxi. 9; Hos. xiv. 9)—on the stone and the rock. Not so those who loved God's law (Ps. cxix. 165).

and be broken] Their proud heart broken; so that they may receive healing (lxi. 1; cp. Matt. xxi. 44).

and be taken] So as to be manifestly, and hopelessly, in the power of their captor:—as the "sons of Israel" had found themselves captured in the net of Providential justice, Gen. xlii. 21, xliv. 16, l. 18.

16. *Bind up*] *Bind* **thou up**. The Targum distinctly, and the LXX. by implication, make this verse to be God's command to the prophet and *v.* 17 to be the prophet's response. This view is strongly confirmed

(1) By the command to Daniel, xii. 4 (cp. 9): "Shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end" (see also Rev. xxii. 10).

(2) By the use of the word rendered "disciples" in liv. 13; "All thy children shall be *taught of the Lord*" (cp. l. 4):—a promise which is quoted and commented upon by our Saviour Himself thus: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that heareth (the message) *from the Father, and learneth*, cometh unto Me." (John vi. 45.)

(3) By the analogy of ch. xxix. 11; where Isaiah's prophecies, conveyed in almost a continuous flow of allegory and parable, are compared to "a book that is sealed."

(4) By the fact that *this* commission is the complement of the one given to the prophet in ch. vi: constituting him not only envoy to the Jewish Church at large, but head of a new community to be formed inside that Church,—of the embryo Christian Church, which consisted of all who "looked for redemption."

the testimony] (*v.* 20). The attested prophecy concerning Pekah and Rezin was to have an immediate fulfilment; and so was written on an open tablet. The testimony, which the prophet was to *bind up*, related to the Great Central event of human history; and had to be recorded for the use of many generations of the faithful yet to come.

What could this be but the testimony concerning Immanuel?—that "testimony of Jesus" which from the time of the *Protevangelium* had been "the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

This record needed no other human attestation than the prophet's own;—for he had received God's own witness to his truthfulness by the fulfilment of prophecies of a nearer range.

seal the law] that law which men are thinking to abrogate (v. 24, cp. xxiv. 5), but which is now ready to judge them; those "living oracles," which are full of the seeds of eternal life. Set upon the law the seal of prophecy; the mystic seal, which closes that volume more firmly against the self-conceited, and yet reveals more fully to the lowly disciple (who "has the law in his heart," li. 7) its hidden stores of comfort and edification.

Here, it would seem, the "instruction" (*v.* 11) ends. The prophet now resumes his own address.

17. *I will wait upon*] Rather, *I will wait* **for** (*s.w.a.* xxx. 18, lxiv. 4, H. 3; Hab. ii. 3; Dan. xii. 12). However long the vision may "tarry" (Hab. ii. 3), he is sure that it will come in due time; and he is content to wait.

Obs. In ch. lxiv the word is followed (*v.* 7), as here, by mention of the "hiding away" of God's countenance. In Dan. xii. 12, as here, it follows on the "sealing" of the prophetic message.

that hideth his face] As from the outset He had warned them that He should do in case of their rebelling: Deut. xxxi. 17, 18, xxxii. 20 (cp. Ps. xliv. 24, lxxxviii. 14).

The priestly benediction said: "The Lord make His face to shine unto thee...The Lord lift up His face unto thee" (Num. vi. 25, 26; cp. Ps. lxvii. 1, 2). Such was the loving provision God had made for "*the house of Jacob*;" but they would not "walk in His light" (ch. ii. 5). Their "sins hid away His face from" them (lix. 2). Therefore "they were troubled" (Ps. civ. 29).

Obs. 1. The Targum has: "the Lord, who has said that He would take away His Shekinah from the house of Jacob."

Obs. 2. Isaiah must needs share in the temporal suffering which followed this darkening of "the light of Israel." Nay, like Paul afterwards (Rom. ix. 2, 3), he would have "great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart" on their account;—even as the Redeemer wept over those who would not

that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

18 [c]Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* [c] Hebr. 2. 13.

recognize "the things that tended to their peace." This burden he bore in patient faith;—meet type of Him, who on the cross, "forsaken" by "His God," still "trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him" (Ps. xxii. 8).

and I will look for him] as those, who are in darkness, look expectantly for the morning (cp. Ps. cxxx. 5). The same word is used in Gen. xlix. 18; Ps. xl. 1; ch. xxv. 9, xxvi. 8, li. 5, lx. 9.

Obs. 1. In Gen. xlix. 18, the object looked for is, "the salvation of the Lord." The first time the word "salvation" occurs in the Bible is from the mouth of "Israel" dying in Egypt. When Israel, consecrated by their Paschal feast, marched out of Egypt, they "*saw* the salvation of the Lord" (Exod. xiv. 13; cp. xv. 2) in typical history. Isaiah, surrounded by a decaying fleshly Israel, which seemed drawing near to its last gasp, could "look for" that same, long-deferred, "salvation." He thus "set to his seal" in attestation of God's revealed truth.

Obs. 2. The LXX. has καὶ πεποιθὼς ἔσομαι ἐπ' αὐτῷ; as also in xii. 2, and 2 S. xxii. 3.

Obs. 3. The same words are quoted in Heb. ii. 13; immediately before a quotation from *v.* 18. Each citation is fragmentary. The fragment of *v.* 17 must be supposed to carry with it what precedes; as the fragment of *v.* 18 to include what follows after.

For what is the event to which the prophet refers when he says, "*I will look* for Him"? —Must it not be the fulfilment of the promise, "He, the Lord of the Hosts, shall be a sanctuary" (*v.* 14)? He, "the King" (vi. 5), will be a sanctuary in the midst of those who "sanctify Him" (*v.* 13):—who sanctify Him "in their hearts" (1 Pet. iii. 15); for the temple is destroyed. Must not these, then, be the "holy seed" (vi. 13); the "substantial" Israel? And how can this holy seed have been formed out of the "seed of evildoers" (i. 4)? How, except by that Son, whose name is "God with us"? In no other way could sinful humanity have been sanctified. Then, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are both of one" (Heb. ii. 11). By offering His pure human nature on the altar of holy love He made atonement for sin, and rising from the dead became "the Captain of our salvation" (Heb. ii. 10), opening the way for the "many sons of God" (ib.; cp. John i. 12).

18. *Behold*] Introducing (vii. 14) a momentous statement.

I and the children whom the LORD *hath given me*] The words resemble those used by Jacob on the morning after he had "seen the face of God" and obtained the name of Israel (Gen. xxxiii. 5, xxxii. 28). On the previous night Jacob had seemed on the verge of destruction: "I fear him (Esau), lest he come and smite me—the mother upon the children." He was "*left alone*" (Gen. xxxii. 24; cp. ch. li. 2). One who was "*a man*," yet "*God*," appeared, and wrestled with him: evoking, by His presence, a new life; and bestowing a new name and a true blessing upon him. Then "the morning-dawn" appeared (cp. *v.* 20 below); and Jacob went forth to see "all things new;"—to see himself *Israel;* his children no longer his, but God's gracious gift to him; Esau no longer the estranged brother and terrible avenger, but ready to embrace him and to weep with him tears such as befitted the children of the same womb.

So now Isaiah. He had seen the "house of Jacob" (ii. 5) doomed to be "devoured of the sword" (i. 20)—even as Hosea had seen it, "the mother upon the children" (Hos. x. 14, *s.w.a.* in Gen. xxxii. 11). Then —in that hour of darkness (v. 30)—when left alone, he "sees the Lord of Hosts;" and One, who though as man in form is yet "Immanuel," speaks to him with "the strength of the hand" (*v.* 11), bidding him have no fear. The two worldly houses of Israel are to be abandoned: but a higher, spiritual, Church shall come forth, fraught with blessing, to be "the Lord's salvation to the end of the earth" (xlix. 6).

are for signs and for wonders] Prophecies of what God is about to do, conveyed in *strange and mysterious words and deeds.*

in Israel] which has become "spiritually Egypt" (Rev. xi. 8, cp. i. 9, 10); and requires that a new and greater Act of Redemption should be accomplished, to be attended with "signs and wonders," as that first was (Exod. iv. 21, 28, vii. 3; Deut. vi. 22, vii. 18, 19; Jer. xxxii. 21); to be preceded also by the sacrifice of the One Paschal Lamb (cp. on xxx. 29, 30, xxxi. 5) "in Israel."

from the LORD *of hosts*] Lit. "*from with;*" coming forth from Him (vii. 11, xxviii. 29, xxix. 6; Ps. cxviii. 23; cp. Gen. xli. 32; Ruth ii. 12; 1 K. ii. 33; Ps. cxxi. 2).

which dwelleth (Hebr. *shokén*) **on** *mount Zion*]—the "Mount Zion that cannot be removed" (Ps. cxxv. 1; cp. ch. xxxiii. 5; Heb. xii. 22, 28).

Obs. 1. Isaiah and his sons were "signs and wonders," in various subordinate ways.

(1) Isaiah's whole ministry was a portent and prodigy to that generation. His name

for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

19 ¶ And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that

was "the salvation of the Lord;" and during Sennacherib's invasion he stood as the intercessor, in answer to whose prayer the promise was made, "I will defend this city *to save* it" (xxxvii. 35). And, again, when the doom of captivity in Babylon was pronounced, he foretold recovery out of it. Yet the larger part of his prophecies seemed to refer to something of far wider range; reaching even to the "purging away of iniquity" (xxvii. 9, xxxiii. 24), the abolition of death (xxv. 8), the reign of the Lord of Hosts Himself in glory on Mount Zion (xxiv. 23).

If it was asked how this was to be accomplished, his answer was: "Believe it. I will give you a sign from the Lord; A virgin shall bear a Son, and His name shall be Immanuel. Light has shone upon the land of Death-shade; for a Child is born to take our part, and His Name is, The Mighty God."

To the men that heard him he seemed "as one who mocked;" or, as one who was beside himself (cp. Mark iii. 21); or, as one whom "much learning" (Acts xxvi. 24), and excessive poring over the "sealed book" of prophecy, had "sent off into madness" (ch. xxviii. 11, 14, xxix. 11, 12).

(2) *Shear-yashuv*, "The remnant shall return," was also a mystery. His name had a first application to "the remnant" who "returned to the Lord" (x. 21) under Hezekiah. Yet the terms "remnant of Jacob," "remnant of Israel" (x. 21, 22), and "remnant of His people" (xi. 11), taken in combination with the words of Moses, Deut. xxx. 2, seemed to point to some greater restoration; including, it might well seem, "broken" Ephraim (vii. 8; cp. xi. 12). But further; the name said unqualifiedly "*the rest*:"—might not that include what Amos had spoken of "the rest of *Edom*," and, indeed, "all the nations" (Amos ix. 12; Ps. xxii. 27), even Assyria and Egypt (xix. 23—25), and "the uttermost part of the earth" (xxiv. 16)? Nay; must it not go deeper yet? must it not include a redemption of those who had sunk into the grave (xxvi. 19; cp. Hos. xiii. 14, xiv. 7), and of "the prisoners gathered in the pit" (xxiv. 22)?

(3) Similarly, of *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*. The name had its first reference to the *spoiling* of those, who were intending to dismantle Jerusalem and secularize "the city of God." But it applied to all the enemies of Zion:—to the men of Judah, who "made widows their prey" (x. 2, 3), to the Assyrian spoiler (xxxiii. 1), but also to the mightiest spoiler of all, "Lucifer, son of the morning" (xiv. 12; cp. xlix. 24, 25, liii. 11, 12).

Obs. 2. Isaiah and his sons represented mystically the new spiritual Israel and his children. These children include all that are "taught of the Lord" (*v.* 16);—who were "born not of the will of the flesh, but of God" (John i. 13; cp. James i. 18), "born again of incorruptible seed by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. i. 23), "the Word made flesh" (John i. 14).

Obs. 3. The quotation of this verse in Heb. ii. 13, and the remarks made upon it, must be considered to presuppose a knowledge of ch. ix. 6. The spiritual Church is formed of those who are still "partakers of flesh and blood," yet they are "begotten again" to holiness and immortality. How could this be? *Because* "a Child is born to us, a Son is given to us"...whose Name is "the mighty God." "*He Himself likewise* took part in" flesh and blood, that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." To form a new family of "*heirs of salvation*" (Heb. i. 14), out of "flesh and blood" (which "*cannot* inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. xv. 50), "the Lord from heaven" was born into the world "*a child*"—"not ashamed" to be a Son of man—nay, willing to "pour out His soul unto death" (liii. 12), as a sin-offering; that having silenced the accuser (ch. l. 8, 9, liii. 11) He might rise the "first-begotten" (Heb. i. 6; Rev. i. 5), "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. i. 18), "the author of eternal life to all them that obey Him" (Heb. v. 9).

Obs. 4. Consider also John vi. 37, 39, x. 29, xvii. 1, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24;—noting that in the last chapter Christ is also the "Apostle" (see on *v.* 6, above), and the "sanctuary." (See especially *v.* 19, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.")

19. This little flock, which "looks for" such salvation, may well despise the poor arts of necromancy and wizardry, to which the judicially blinded will resort, as Saul did, when forsaken of God (1 S. xxviii. 6 f.).

Seek unto] Have recourse to them for guidance; *s.w.a.* xi. 10, xix. 3.

that peep] *i.e.* **chirp**; with thin, feeble, voice; like birds, x. 14, xxxviii. 14. Cp. xxix. 4.

should not] This is the answer, which those who have "sanctified the Lord God of Hosts," are to be ready to give "with meekness and reverence" (1 Pet. iii. 15).

peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

[d] Luke 16. 29.

20 [d] To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is*

[†] Heb. *no morning.*

[†] no light in them.

21 And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

22 And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness.

Should not a people (one that has been taken by God to be a people, Exod. vi. 7) *seek* (in every time of peril) *unto its God* (the living God, xxxvii. 4, 17)? **On behalf of** (Jer. xxi. 2) *the living* (shall they seek) *unto the dead?*

Obs. 1. In Deut. xviii. 10—18, where the various pagan rites of divination are mentioned, the remedy provided against them is the promise of the Great Prophet to come. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, *of thy brethren*, like unto me."

Obs. 2. Isaiah, in whom the spirit of Moses so revived (especially in chh. i—v), and in whom the spirit of Christ was so anticipated (especially in chh. xlix—lxvi), stands as a middle link in the chain that connected the Mediators of the two covenants.

20. *To the law...*] Or, "For the law and for...." This was to be the watchword of the faithful. Cp. "For the Lord and for Gideon" (Judg. vii. 18).

Whatever lines of action deviated from the prescriptions of the Law, and from the testimonies of the Prophets concerning the future Redeemer, must be from the realm of darkness.

it is because there is no light in them] Or, "surely there is no morning-dawn for him;"—whosoever he be—the people at large (whose "way" was condemned in *v.* 11), or Ahaz, or Uriah the priest; or a greater apostate still. If any will not wait in faith for the bright morning-dawn (Ps. cx. 3), which God has designed to give,—he passes sentence on himself. There is no dawn in store *for him.*

Ahaz, we know, sent to the king of Assyria to say, "I am *thy servant* and *thy son;* come up and save me." 2 K. xvi. 7.

He trusted in the "glory" of that "Lucifer, son of *the morning-dawn* (*s.w.*)" (xiv. 12). Therefore only distress and disappointment and perplexity surrounded him. So too, would it be with the nation.

For them was no such happy termination of their night of agony, as Jacob had (Gen. xxxii. 24, 26, 31, *s.w.*); or, as the antitype of Jacob had in Ps. xxii (see the title of the psalm). On the contrary, their "morning" (*s.w.*) would be turned into darkness (Amos iv. 13).

21. *And they*] Or, *And* **he**. The verbs and pronouns in *vv.* 21, 22 are all in the singular;—as if pointing to the invisible enemy—the arch-rebel—who was the prime mover in all the darkness of heathenism.

shall pass through it] Through that land of shadow of death (cp. Jer. ii. 6; ch. xxxiv. 10), without morning-dawn, to which his self-chosen way (*v.* 11) has led him.

hardly bestead] Or, "hardened," "hardening himself:"—sullenly steeling his soul against the misery that has befallen him (2 K. xvii. 14; Jer. vii. 26).

and hungry] With ever unsatisfied cravings; "feeding on ashes" that cannot allay hunger (xliv. 20).

Thus disappointed, and famishing, he *shall fret himself* into rage, and shall *curse* (or, **revile**, Exod. xxii. 28; cp. Judg. ix. 27) *his king and his God*,—against whose sovereignty he has been rebelling (Ps. ii. 1—6): and shall *look upward*, turning his face, in reproachful despair, towards that heaven which is now closed against him. (Cp. v. 30; Jer. xiii. 16; John xii. 35, 36.)

22. So his glance falls back to *the earth: and behold trouble and darkness, gloominess of distress; and* **in thick** *darkness* **is he driven away**,—cast out of the land of Immanuel (*v.* 8), which he has despised and profaned.

The word rendered "driven away" is a variation of the verb which is used of Israel's dispersion in xxvii. 13, Deut. xxx. 1, 4, &c.

Obs. 1. This darkness was owing to the "hiding away of God's face" from the sinful people (*v.* 17; cp. lix. 2, 9),—the "children of the kingdom" (Matt. viii. 12).

Obs. 2. The greatness of the prophecy in ix. 6, 7 (cp. ii. 1—5, lx. 1—3) requires us to think of *v.* 22 as including a reference to more than Ahaz or Sennacherib, than Canaan or Assyria. When Judah reviled and crucified its King, it appeared as if the prince of darkness had gained universal dominion over our earth. But in that very hour he was "cast out" (John xii. 31), "spoiled" (Col. ii. 15), "destroyed" (Heb. ii. 14).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 6.)

In the construction adopted above, the וכשוש is considered to stand in much the same relation to the preceding finite verb which the ולאמר of xliv. 28 does. The form כשוש may have been chosen to connect it more closely, by assonance, with the מאסו. Ahaz and his subjects had cast away the divine promise, not sadly or doubtingly, but with a merry heart; *rejoicing* in the thought that they were now in the same position with Rezin and Pekah;—free from the galling fetters of the law and the Davidic covenant.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 8.)

The word rendered "stretching out" (מָטוֹת) occurs here only. David Kimchi took it as equivalent to מֹטוֹת "staves;" a word which has two applications; (1) to the staves of a yoke; Lev. xxvi. 13; Isai. lviii. 6, 9; Jer. xxviii. 10, 12, 13; Ezek. xxxiv. 27: and (2) to the staves of the Ark of the Covenant: 1 Chro. xv. 15.

It is probable that the word signifies "outspreadings," but with a *reference* to the word מֹטוֹת. In 1 K. vi. 20, 27, 2 Chro. iii. 8, 11, we have the cherubim of glory occupying with their wings the whole breadth (רֹחַב) of the *sanctuary;* here we have "the glory" of Asshur, filling the whole breadth (*s. w.*) of the *Holy Land.* Those outstretched wings were no *protection*, but a heavy yoke (2 Chro. xxviii. 21).

Obs. The Assyrian sculptures represent their deity in the form of a mystical head with outstretched wings.

NOTE C. (ON *v.* 11.)

The extraordinary influence exercised by Isaiah on his own age is recognized by one who takes so imperfect a view of inspiration as Ewald does. In his 'Hist. of Isr.,' vol. IV., he remarks: "He (Isaiah) was an absolutely immoveable refuge in the tempest" (p. 174). "At this crisis the eternal and glorified expectation of the kingdom of God was...placed in antagonism to all heathen dominion by violence: and *nothing is more marvellous than the undaunted attitude of Isaiah in encountering the fury of the dreaded king of kings* with the calmness of this blessed hope" (p. 202). "In the long series of centuries through which the history passes, few spirits approach so near as Isaiah to the elevation of Moses" (p. 184).

No adequate explanation of this wonder can be given, except that which Isaiah himself assigns. It was the result of an express communication to him of a *divine word*, accompanied by *a divine action upon his spirit.*

CHAPTER IX.

1 *What joy shall be in the midst of afflictions, by the kingdom and birth of Christ.* 8 *The judgments upon Israel for their pride,* 13 *for their hypocrisy,* 18 *and for their impenitency.*

NEVERTHELESS the dimness *shall* not *be* such as *was* in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and

CHAP. IX. The preceding chapter ended with the expulsion of him, who rejected "the law and the testimony." But the band of faithful disciples, who held firmly to God's word, should find "light rising up in the darkness" (Ps. cxi. 4; cp. Exod. xiv. 20).

This light is seen by the prophet first illumining the northern part of the land,—the furthest from Jerusalem.

1. *Nevertheless...*] Or, **For no gloom is there to her that was distressed.** The "for" reverts to the promise of viii. 14; which shall be made good, when to all outward appearance the powers of evil seem on the point of establishing their empire over the whole world. Then "she that was distressed" and hemmed in by the oppressor, the land of Immanuel (viii. 8), is rescued out of the threatening gloom.

when at the first...] Rather:—**At the former time He brought contempt** (*s. w. a.* xxiii. 9) **on** *the land of Zebulun and* **on** *the land of Naphtali;* **but in the latter time He brought honour** (*s. w. a.* Jer. xxx. 19). The meaning of the verbs is established by iii. 5, xvi. 14; 2 S. vi. 22; Hos. iv. 7; Prov. xii. 9.

Here, then, we have already that antithesis of the "*former*" and "*latter*" cycles of Israelic history, which occurs so frequently in chh. xli—lxv. Cp. Hagg. ii. 9. (See also i. 26, xxx. 8; Deut. xxix. 22; Ps. lxxviii. 4, 6, cii. 18.)

Zebulun and Naphtali had, from an early period, borne the brunt of the assaults of the

afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee ‖ of the nations.

‖ Or, *populous.*

2 [a] The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

[a] Matth. 4. 16. Eph. 5. 14.

neighbouring heathen (Judg. iv. 6, 10, vi. 35; cp. Ps. lxviii. 27). Naphtali suffered severely from Syrian invasion, B.C. 951 ("all Chinneroth and all the land of Naphtali," 1 K. xv. 20); and when Tiglath-Pileser began to carry away portions of the population, we find Kadesh, Hazor, Gilead, *Galilee*, and "*all the land of Naphtali*" specially mentioned as the districts that suffered (2 K. xv. 29).

They had been the first to fall beneath the yoke of Assyria. To make abundant compensation for their dishonour, the first rays of the light of Immanuel should shine upon them.

In the second part of the verse, the localities that are to be thus raised out of ignominy to a primacy of honour are spoken of in language which has a direct and limited application to the districts first desolated by Assyria, yet is also capable of being understood as pointing outwards to the Gentile world at large.

by the way of the sea] This (like the two co-ordinate terms, "beyond Jordan," and "Galilee of the Nations,") may designate *a tract of land;* that, namely, which lies along the sea of Chinneroth (Josh. xii. 3) or Gennesareth (Mark vi. 53). This would be immediately to the south of the district, in which Kadesh and Hazor (2 K. xv. 29) stood. (Cp. Deut. xxxiii. 23.) Yet the words might be taken indefinitely "*towards the sea*," or "towards the west" (cp. Ezek. xli. 12).

Obs. In xxiv. 15 we have "the name of the Lord" glorified in "the isles of *the sea*" (*s. w.*), while darkness has overspread the "city" and the "land" (of Judah).

beyond Jordan] The phrase, used absolutely, would naturally designate the land on the eastern side of Jordan. So, as that region (scarcely reckoned "holy," Josh. xxii. 19) had shared in Naphtali's humiliation (2 K. xv. 23), it should have a share in its glory.

Galilee of the nations] Or, "the circuit of the nations." The phrase occurs nowhere else. The territory given by Solomon to Hiram (1 K. ix. 10—14,—the first dismemberment of his kingdom) was "in the land of the *Galil*." But we also find Kadesh of Naphtali (Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32) described as being "in the *Galil*." Now, as Kadesh was a Levitical city and a city of refuge (and, it seems, near Jordan), we can scarcely suppose this to have been in the district assigned to Hiram. Consequently we are led to infer that *Galilee* was a name given to an extended tract of land,—probably, the margin (τὰ μεθόρια) on which Naphtali touched the adjacent Gentile populations.

Obs. 1. The phrase was well suited to depict an outward spreading of the light upon the whole circle of the Gentile world.

Obs. 2. As St Matthew quotes the prophecy about Immanuel in i. 23 and gives us the key to its interpretation in xxviii. 20 (see above on vii. 14); so, in like manner, he quotes the present passage in iv. 14—16, and supplies in xxvi. 32, xxviii. 7, 10, 16, 19 the full view of its import. The light which was to shine on them that sat in the shadow of death was, the light which radiated from the Resurrection of Christ.

Obs. 3. In Acts i. 8, 11 we have the same typical aspects of "Galilee" remarkably set before us. We read in *v.* 8, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and in Samaria and" (not, "in Galilee," but) "unto the uttermost part of the earth." Yet in *v.* 11, the angels begin their address to the Apostles, "*Ye men of Galilee.*" (Cp. Acts ii. 7, x. 37.) It was to men of Galilee that the command was given, "Go forth and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. xxviii. 19).

Obs. 4. As to the honour conferred on Galilee, and the adjacent parts, when "Immanuel" appeared, we may note that—

(*a*) Our Lord's first 30 years were spent at Nazareth, in Zebulun.

(*b*) His first miracles and preaching were in Galilee.

(*c*) His disciples, who accompanied Him everywhere as the germ of the New Israel, seem to have been most of them Galileans.

(*d*) The greater part of His ministry was in the neighbourhood of the sea of Galilee.

(*e*) The great confession made by Peter, and the transfiguration which soon followed it, took place near Cæsarea Philippi, "beyond Jordan."

(*f*) The risen Saviour "went before them into Galilee;"—thereby symbolizing the guidance He would afford them, when they went forth into "the circuit of the nations." His presence would "go before them," no less really than of old it had preceded Israel (Exod. xxiii. 20—23) to give them possession of Canaan.

2. *The people that...*] (Construction as in Num. xi. 34.) Under this description are included not only Zebulun and Naphtali, but those who dwelt toward the sea,—beyond Jordan,—in the whole circuit of the nations (the Jewish nation itself also, Acts xxvi. 23).

a great light] That "true light," beneath which Judah had refused to walk (ii. 5, 6).

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* ‖ not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, *and* as *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

‖ Or, *to him.*

‖ Or, *When thou brakest.*

4 ‖ For thou hast broken the yoke

This is the first approach of the light, which in the end shall transfigure the Holy City (lx. 19, 20): cp. x. 17, xlii. 6, xlix. 6. (Luke i. 78; John i. 4, 9, viii. 12, ix. 5.)

Obs. The first rays of that glorious light were seen at Cana of *Galilee*, John ii. 11.

they that dwell (or, *that sat*, Ps. cvii. 10) *in the land of the shadow of death*] Who *sat* there as prisoners; "bound in affliction" (Ps. cvii. 10).

Obs. 1. Each several recovery out of the misery brought by sin was like a new breaking in of divine light. The joy of Hezekiah's passover,—the deliverance from Sennacherib,—the restoration from Babylon,—were so many renewals of the light of God's countenance. Yet these were only types of the great deliverance that was needed by man,—deliverance from guilt, corruption, and death. The "*great* light" had to do with this emancipation. It commenced to dawn, when "Jesus of Nazareth...went about doing good, and healing *all that were oppressed of the devil*" (Acts x. 38);—it shone forth, when He, "first *out of the resurrection from the dead*," announced "light to the people and to the Gentiles" (Acts xxvi. 23).—Then was our earth, which for 4000 years had been "the land of Death-shade" (Rom. v. 14), visited by the "dayspring from on high" (Luke i. 78, 79).

Obs. 2. The quotation in Matt. iv. 14—16 follows upon the account of Christ's victory over the Tempter. The three mentions of Galilee in Matt. xxviii. 7, 10, 16 follow upon the Resurrection;—the overthrow of the empire of Death.

3. Now, in this "great light," was true joy for all who walked in it:—not like the joy that prevailed in the days of national greatness,—under Solomon, especially,—when "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is on the sea-shore for multitude; *eating and drinking and rejoicing*" (1 K. iv. 20; cp. ch. xxii. 13). That outward mirth was the beginning of long and grievous sorrow (Neh. ix. 23—27). Solomon's reign left a yoke upon the people's neck;—a yoke of burdensome tribute, which led to rebellion (1 K. xii. 4, 18); a yoke of secularized monarchy; a yoke of bondage to heathen views and practices. In Uzziah's reign there had been a similar abounding of godless mirth (v. 11—14). Of both Solomon's and Uzziah's days it might be said; *Thou* **multipliedst**, *the nation, Thou* **didst not increase** *the joy*,—but quite the reverse; for they forgat Thee; and Thou "hiddest away" (viii. 17) from them the "joy of Thy countenance," and all "joy was darkened" (xxiv. 11).—On the marginal rendering see Note A (at the end of the chapter).

But now—though the nation outwardly be "diminished and brought low," nay, most of it, ejected, yet—the faithful, who have "sanctified the Lord" (viii. 13), are able to rejoice with "great joy;" to rejoice "*before God*;" who has now unveiled Himself to them in "the Son," whom He has given (cp. Luke ii. 9, 10).

they joy before thee] (Deut. xii. 7, 12; Ps. xcviii. 8, 9) **as with** *the joy of harvest*;—like men who see the fruit of seed that had been sown amidst tears (Ps. cxxvi. 6):—*as men rejoice when*, after severe toil and conflict, *they divide the spoil* (cp. liii. 12, *s. w.* xxxiii. 23).

Not such had been the premature rejoicing of Solomon's reign. The good seed of the new Davidic epoch had then only just been sown,—was yet only in the blade,—when a countless host of pagan rites and superstitions, destructive as that horde of Midianites, "came up and entered the land to destroy it" (Judg. vi. 3—5).

4. That period of darkness is now over. That *yoke* of Israel's *burden*, heavy as the one under which they had groaned in Egypt (Exod. i. 11, v. 6),—*the staff of his shoulder* (the wooden part of the yoke, which rested on the back of the neck and shoulders, Ps. lxxxi. 6; ch. x. 27, xiv. 25),—*the rod* (or, sceptre) *of his oppressor* (*s. w. a.* xiv. 4; cp. Exod. v. 6, 10, 13, 14), have been *broken*.

as in the day of Midian] Judg. viii. 1—23 (cp. ch. x. 26). The chief characteristic of that victory was, that it was accomplished without military prowess, by a small body of men selected out of Israel; selected expressly in order that Israel "might not vaunt itself against" the Lord, "saying, 'My own hand hath saved me" (Judg. vii. 2). So it was made evident to Gideon, that "the Lord was *with*" Israel (*'immanu*, Judg. vi. 13).

Obs. 1. So long as that was the case, Israel was like "the fleece of wool" filled with dew, while the world around was dry. But now the time had arrived when the long-favoured people was to be cast away, and the rich dews of heaven to descend on the nations at large. (Judg. vi. 36—40.)

Obs. 2. The "oppressor" was, no doubt (in its ultimate reference), he who had thrown "the cords of Hades" (Ps. xviii. 5) not over Israel only, but over the whole race of man (cp. Acts x. 38);—so that all must at least

[b] Judg. 7. 22. chap. 10. 26.

of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of [b] Midian.

[‖] Or, *When the whole battle of the warrior was, &c.* [‖] Or, *and it was, &c.* [†] Heb. *meat.*

5 [‖] For every battle of the warrior *is* with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; [‖] but *this* shall be with burning *and* [†] fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a [c] son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

[c] John 3. 16.

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taste of "the waters of trembling" (Judg. vii. 1—8). His yoke was "the fear of death" (Heb. ii. 15).

This, however, no way hinders us from seeing intermediate fulfilments of the vision:—as, especially, in Sennacherib's overthrow; which, like Midian's, was in one night, and not effected by human power.

5. *For every battle...*] The words rendered "battle" and "warrior" occur here only; and are of uncertain meaning (see Note B).—Most moderns, following Kimchi, render: "For every boot of tramping warrior" (or, him that tramps in battle-fray), "and the garment rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire." The accoutrements of war should be utterly destroyed (cp. Ps. xlvi. 9) as impure (see on i. 7, lxiv. 11).

Obs. 1. So only—by purifying fire (cp. iv. 4)—could the reign of the "Prince of Peace" be prepared. This is very pointedly stated by our Lord Himself in Matt. x. 34; "Think not that I am come to send forth (βαλεῖν) peace upon the earth," compared with Luke xii. 49—52: "I am come to send forth (βαλεῖν) fire on the earth:—and what will I? would that it were already kindled!" Only through that "baptism of fire,"—the fire of Divine Love (see on *v.* 7)—was "the kingdom of this world" to be transformed into "the kingdom of the Lord and His Christ."

Obs. 2. The words "fuel of fire" recur in *v.* 19; and the words rendered "shall be for burning" in lxiv. 10 (11).

6. The assurance of this victory of peace is given in the birth of a Child, who must undoubtedly be the same as the "God with us" of vii. 14.

unto us...] The Hebrew order is: "For a child is born unto us," or (Josh. v. 14), "for us;" to be *ours*, our defender.

Obs. 1. The same "for us" occurs twice in xxvi. 12.

Obs. 2. "A child." He is partaker of the same nature with "the children" of viii. 18 (Heb. ii. 14).

a son is given] unto us (or, for us). This could be none other than the long-hoped for "Son of David" (2 S. vii. 12—16), the Anointed Son of God (Ps. ii. 2, 6, 7, 12).

Obs. 1. That He is the heir of David's throne, is implied in *v.* 7.

Obs. 2. On the "*gift*" of the Only-Begotten Son, cp. John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32.

and the government (or, princedom) **is** *upon his shoulder*] (Cp. xxii. 22.) To Him it is no burden; for the Son of God "*sustains all things* by the word of His power" (Heb. i. 3).

Obs. The word rendered "government" (Hebr. *misrah*) occurs only here and in *v.* 7. It can scarcely be without a reference to the name *Isra-el*,—the title of him who "*had princely power* with God" (Gen. xxxii. 28; Hos. xii. 3, 4).

and his name shall be called] **Is** *called.* The Targ. adds "from eternity."

Wonderful] Or, "Wonder" (*i.e.* Miracle):—*s. w. a.* xxv. 1; Exod. xv. 11; Ps. lxxxviii. 10, 12, lxxxix. 5. Cp. Judg. xiii. 18. Aq. θαυμαστός, Sy. παραδοξασμός.

Obs. The Incarnation was *the miracle of miracles*;—the "confessedly great mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. iii. 15).

Counseller] *Deviser* of all-wise counsel, xix. 17 (Sy. βουλευτικός); *giver*, also, of counsel to His people, Micah iv. 9 (Aq. σύμβουλος).

Obs. 1. The LXX. (Vatic.) sums up the whole series of names in, "Angel of Great Counsel" (μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος);—as if confounded (says St Jerome) by the majesty of the prophet's language.

Obs. 2. This and the preceding title (rightly separated from it, see Note C) are combined in xxviii. 29, "the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel."

The mighty God] See x. 21 (*s. w.*); which of itself would be fatal to all other renderings. But see also, Deut. x. 17; Jer. xxxii. 18; Neh. ix. 32: and cp. Ps. xxiv. 8.

Obs. 1. The word for "God" (EL) links on the present text to vii. 14 (*Immanu*-EL). It is used as the express contrast of "man" in xxxi. 3, Hos. xi. 9.

Obs. 2. In xi. 2, we are told that "the Spirit of *Counsel* and of *Might*" shall rest on the Righteous King.

The everlasting Father] Or, **Father of Eternity** (*s. w. a.* lvii. 15). Symm. πατὴρ αἰῶνος. The Alexn. LXX. has πατὴρ τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, which is also found (see Mr Field's 'Hexapla') in Irenæus and Clem. Alex.—Vulg. "Pater futuri sæculi."

7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace [d] *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The [e] zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

[d] Luke i. 32, 33.

[e] 2 Kin. 19. 31. chap. 37. 32.

Obs. 1. Joseph, named "*Saviour of the age*" (or, "*Support of the world*," Gen. xli. 45), as having saved Egypt from famine, speaks of himself as "made *a father* to Pharaoh" (Gen. xlv. 8; cp. ch. xxii. 21). Thus the title "Father of Eternity" is equivalent to "the author of everlasting salvation" (Heb. v. 9, cp. John x. 28).

Obs. 2. As "Father of Eternity" is here followed by "Prince of Peace," so in lvii. 15—19, He "who inhabiteth eternity" says of Himself; "I create the fruit of the lips; *Peace, Peace*, to him that is far off and to him that is near."

The Prince of Peace] Aq., Symm., Th. ἄρχων εἰρήνης.—He would bring in the reign of peace, which had been seen by the prophet in vision at ii. 4.

This hope of "a Prince of Peace," who should quell the great enemy of man (Gen. iii. 15), was shadowed forth in mystical history by the priestly king of Salem (Heb. vii. 2); projected into prophecy under the title of "Shiloh" (the Tranquil One); realized humanly, in faint outlines, in the person of Solomon (*Shelomoh*, the Peaceful One); then again limned by Solomon himself with greater richness of prophetic detail (Ps. lxxii); and, at last, fully and clearly embodied in Isaiah's predictions concerning the Righteous King (xxxii. 17, 18), and the "Servant of the Lord," by whom our "peace" would be worked out (liii. 5; cp. xxvi. 3, 12, lii. 7, liv. 10, 13, lx. 17, lxvi. 12).

Obs. 1. The term rendered "Prince" is the same that is used of "*the Captain* of the Lord's host," Josh. v. 14, 15. The LXX. has ἀρχιστράτηγος in Josh. v. 14, 15; but in ch. xxx. 4 (Judg. v. 15; Neh. ii. 9) ἀρχηγός; the word used in Heb. ii. 10 (a little before the quotation of Isai. viii. 17, 18), in Heb. xii. 2, and in Acts iii. 15, v. 31.

Obs. 2. The angelic anthem sung at Christ's birth, "upon earth peace" (Luke ii. 14), began at once to be realized after the Resurrection (Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 19, 21, 26; cp. Rom. iv. 25, v. 1; Heb. xiii. 20).

7. *Of the increase...*] Or, **To** *the increase of* **the** *government* (or, princedom, *v.* 6) *and* **to** *peace* **is no limit** (LXX. ὅριον: Sy. and Th. πέρας). His rule shall spread forth from Zion over the whole earth,—over the whole universe (Eph. i. 22; Matt. xxviii. 18). "He is truly '*semper Augustus*,' ever extending His peaceful sovereignty." (Del.)

This universal sovereignty He would exercise in fulfilment of the promise made to David (2 S. vii. 11—16; cp. Luke i. 32—34); as heir of David's throne and sovereignty:—*upon* his throne and *over* his kingdom (Deut. xvii. 18, 20, same preposition), though *above* them,—as the heaven is "*above* the earth" (Ps. ciii. 11).

to order it] Giving it a firm and settled constitution (1 S. xiii. 13; 2 S. vii. 12; Ps. lxxxix. 2, 4, *s. w.*).

to establish it] on a solid basis (Prov. xx. 28: cp. ch. xvi. 5);—or, to sustain it (Ps. xviii. 35, xx. 2, *s. w.*).

with judgment and with **righteousness**] Already, in i. 27, these had been set forth as the means of Zion's redemption. Cp. xi. 3, xxxii. 1.

from henceforth...] The Hebrew accents take these words in connexion with what follows; the punctuation of A. V. seems to agree better with the use of the words in Ps. cxiii. 2, cxv. 18, cxxi. 8, cxxv. 2, cxxxi. 3; ch. lix. 21; Micah iv. 7.

The zeal...] Or, *The* **jealousy**, &c.—This firm establishment of the kingdom of righteousness should be wrought out by Him, whose love for His creatures is such that He will not suffer them to wander away from Him, who is the only Fountain of Blessedness, to follow their self-idolizing, or creature-idolizing, fancies.

This Holy Love would both punish the unfaithfulness of the people at large (Exod. xxxiv. 14; Josh. xxiv. 19), and vindicate the loyal remnant (Joel ii. 18; Zech. i. 14, viii. 2; cp. ch. lxiii. 15).

Obs. 1. The jealousy of God over the purity of His Church is the very measure of His love to it. (Cp. Song of Sol. viii. 6.)

Obs. 2. This "jealousy" supplies another link of connexion between the *fire* of *v.* 5 and *vv.* 6, 7. Cp. Deut. iv. 24, "The Lord thy God is *a devouring fire, a jealous God.*"

IX. 8—X. 4.

As the promise in vii. 14 was at once succeeded by stern threatening, so is the promise of ix. 6, 7. It is commonly assumed that the remainder of the chapter relates to Ephraim only. This view is contradicted by "Jacob" and "Israel" in *vv.* 8, 14, by "*all the people*" in *v.* 9, by "the people" in *vv.* 13, 16, 19; by the recurrence of the *refrain* in ix. 12, 17, 21, x. 4, which carries us back to v. 25 (where the doom of Judah is foretold); and by the marked resemblance between ix. 16 and iii. 12 (which relates to Judah).

Obs. The refrain, "For all this...," had

8 ¶ The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

9 And all the people shall know, *even* Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

10 The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycomores are cut down, but we will change *them into* cedars.

11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and †join his enemies together;

12 The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel †with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

13 ¶ For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the LORD of hosts.

14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.

15 The ancient and honourable, he *is* the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he *is* the tail.

16 For ‖the leaders of this people

† Heb. *mingle.*

† Heb. *with whole mouth.*

‡ chap. 5. 25. & 10. 4.

‖ Or, *they that call them blessed.*

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been employed, when the first sounds of the invader's army were heard in the distance (v. 25).

8. *The Lord sent*] (vi. 8);—or, "sent forth." (It is the verb from which "Shiloah," viii. 6, is derived.) The word is sent, or, sent forth, as if it were a living creature, one of God's envoys. Cp. lv. 10, 11; Ps. cvii. 20, cxlvii. 18.

into Jacob] Or, **against** (1 S. xxiv. 6, 10).

and it hath lighted] Rather, **shall fall**;—fall with the crushing force of a divinely commissioned power (cp. Josh. xi. 7, *s. w.*).

9. *And all the people*] Hebr. "And the people shall know, all of it,—Ephraim, &c." The word extends to the whole people; though its momentum bears down immediately upon Ephraim.

shall know] Hos. ix. 7; Job xxi. 19. They shall then be compelled to recognize facts which they have long ignored: i. 3. Cp. xix. 12; Num. xiv. 34; Jer. xliv. 28.

that say in the pride...] Rather, **amidst** *pride and stoutness of heart*, **wherein they say.** Steeped as they are in pride, they shall yet be forced to admit the actual truth,—their own utter poverty and weakness.

Obs. The same words are used of the Assyrian in x. 12. Under Pekah, Ephraim had thoroughly adopted the God-defying policy of Babel. Under Ahaz, Judah had imbibed the same spirit.

10. Ephraim found its policy of Syrian alliance crumble away beneath the attack of Tiglath-Pileser (2 K. xv. 29); yet it remained impenitent, hardening itself in defiant self-assertion.

The *sycomore* was a light wood, unfit for massive buildings. They would **put cedars in their stead.**

Obs. As if their marble and cedar-wood (ay, or that of Solomon either, 1 K. v. 17, H. 31, x. 27) were proof against the "devouring fire" of God's justice!

11. *Therefore...*] Or, **So** *the Lord* **hath exalted against him** (Israel) *the adversaries of Rezin*,—the Assyrians, who, under Tiglath-Pileser, "took Damascus and slew Rezin" (2 K. xvi. 9);—*and* **will set** *his enemies* **in array**; so that they shall be like a bristling thorny fence (xix. 2, *s. w.*). The Targ. "shall *stir up*" (and so Gesen. in 'Thes.').

12. When Rezin had disappeared, *Syria's* old enmity to Israel would be resumed. Indeed it is implied in 2 Chro. xxviii. 22, 23, that Ahaz did suffer severely from the attacks of the kings of Syria: while in *v.* 18 it is distinctly said that the Philistines invaded Judah and captured several of its towns.

13. At the end of *v.* 12 the "outstretched hand" seems to plead with the people to have pity on themselves. Now, after a pause, it is added—

But *the people* **hath not returned** *unto him...*] Lit. "*as far as* Him;" reproducing the expression used in Deut. iv. 30, xxx. 2. Cp. ch. xix. 22; Hos. xiv. 1; Joel ii. 12; Amos iv. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.

neither **have they sought** *the* LORD] xxxi. 1; Amos v. 4, 5. They have not asked for either His counsel or His help.

14. *Therefore...*] Or, **So** *the Lord* **hath** *cut off*;—by His exterminating sentence. He gave the Assyrian a charge, x. 6.

branch and rush] Rather, **palm-branch** *and rush.* The rush (or sedge), down in the marshy ground, is contrasted with the palm-branch, waving aloft in the air.

Linnæus called the Palm-family "Princes of vegetation:" as one species, the Palmyra palm, had been 25 centuries previously called "King of grasses" (Sanscr. *trina-rāja*).

15. *The ancient...*] iii. 2, 3.

the prophet that teacheth lies] (Hab. ii. 18, *s. w.*) *He* is lowest of all; more degraded than any whom he cajoles.

16. *the leaders...*] See on iii. 12.

cause *them* to err; and ‖ *they that are* led of them *are* † destroyed.

‖ Or, *they that are called blessed of them.* † Heb. *swallowed up.*

17 Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one *is* an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh ‖ folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

‖ Or, *villany.*

18 ¶ For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke.

19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the † fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.

† Heb. *meat.*

20 And he shall † snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

† Heb. *cut.*

21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: *and* they together *shall be* against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

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they that are led of them] Or, *such of them as are led are* **swallowed up**;—in the abyss of misery (Num. xvi. 30). Cp. on iii. 12.

17. *their fatherless and widows*] Matters must have reached the direst extremity, when even those, to whom divine compassion had ever been extended (Deut. x. 18), were to be left unregarded.

every one] Lit. "The whole of it" (the people).

is an hypocrite] So the Vulg., and the Jews generally. The Septuagintal ἄνομοι is probably nearer the true meaning of the word; which seems to be, "profane," or "impious" (cp. x. 6, xxxiii. 14, xxxi. 6, xxiv. 5; and see the note on Job viii. 13).

folly] A strong word;—the folly of him who "says in his heart, There is no God" (see on Job ii. 10); and so indulges in licentious profligacy (*s. w. a.* Josh. vii. 15; Jer. xxix. 23; 1 S. xxv. 25; ch. xxxii. 6).

18. *burneth*] Or, "blazed forth." God having withdrawn His Providential restraints, the pent-up passions of men have broken out like flames: and the land full of "*briers and thorns*" (v. 6; Micah vii. 4) is ready to receive and transmit the conflagration. Cp. x. 17; Heb. vi. 8.

and shall kindle...] Rather, **it also kindled** *the thickets* (x. 34) *of the forest, and they* **were whirled upward** *with the lifting up of smoke.* Vulg. "superbiâ fumi." That was the end reserved for their pride; to be borne aloft to darken the air awhile, and then to be scattered away for ever.

"Of all growths the most remarkable was the *Thorn;* which forms large prickly beds shaped like giant mushrooms...This growth is nowhere more monstrous than over the upper slopes of the Hermon. It makes a hot and sudden blaze like the '*Quebra panella*' of Brazil; and the guides frequently amuse themselves with giving to the mountains *the semblance of volcanoes.*" (Burton and Drake, 'Unexpl. S.' I. 87, 88.)

After the great forest fires of 1871 in Wisconsin and Michigan, "so deep was the darkness caused by the immense volume of smoke that the sun was totally obscured for a distance of 200 miles. This midnight darkness continued for a week." ('The Guardian,' 1 Nov. 1871.)

Obs. The "briers and thorns" would seem to have been kindled in the northern kingdom after the assassination of Pekah (B.C. 739); since his death was followed by an anarchy of nine years. (Cp. 2 K. xv.—30; xvii. 1.)

19. *is the land darkened*] Or, "set on fire;" LXX. συγκέκαυται; Targ. "burnt up;" Del. "turned into coal" (*verkohlt*).

fuel of the fire] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 5.

no man...] Or, "they shall have no pity one for another." (Cp. xix. 2; Lev. xxvi. 37; Deut. xxviii. 54; Jer. xiii. 14.)

20. *And he shall...*] Or, *And* **one snatched** *on the right hand,* **yet was he ahungered**; *and* **ate** *on the left hand,* **yet were they not** *satisfied.* In times of anarchy, cruelty and self-will appear to grow more inordinate by being indulged.

the flesh of his own arm] They, who had "made flesh their *arm*" (Jer. xvii. 5), would in the hour of despair seek to wreak their fury on what had once been their dearest object of trust (cp. Jer. xix. 9).

21. *Manasseh* (shall devour) *Ephraim*] Even the two, who had been specially blessed by the patriarch (Gen. xlviii. 16), consume one another. We seem to have one indication of this strife in Pekah's own history; for when he slew his predecessor, he had as fellow-conspirators *fifty men of the Gileadites* (2 K.

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xv. 25); who belonged to Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 1).

Yet they could suspend their mutual animosity to join in attacking Judah.

Obs. When the outward unity of Israel was thus perishing, what a comfort must it have been to the faithful that they could turn their eyes to the unchanging ground of unity set before them in *vv.* 6, 7;—the "Prince of Peace"!

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 3.)

The Keri here, as in xlix. 5, has לֹי for לֹא. But it is to be observed, that

(1) If לֹי had been the original reading, it is scarcely credible that the negative (running counter, as it did, to all the national feeling) should ever have expelled it.

(2) Aq., Symm., Th. have the negative (οὐκ ἐμεγάλυνας): and so the Vulg.

(3) There is really no call for the *pronoun* at all, since שִׁמְחָה has the article: yet the Keri gives it an extraordinary emphasis; and that rather to the injury, than the improvement, of the sense.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 5.)

The first half of this verse is obscure. Two of the words, סְאוֹן and סֹאן, occur here only. The first has been rendered "battle" (A. V., after Kimchi), "war-shout" (Aben-Ezra, Rashi), "violence" (Symm., followed by Vulg.), "boot" (J. Kimchi, Hengst., Ew., Del.), "trampling" (Forer.), "accoutrement" (Knob., Fürst), &c.

The word rendered "with confused noise" (or "in battle-fray") is in xxix. 6 translated "with earthquake" (as Symm. gives it here): and is followed by *devouring fire* (nearly, as here). Cp. Ezek. xxxviii. 19.

The general meaning, then, would seem to be:—

"The tyrant's yoke is broken. The forces of spiritual darkness, which have settled down on Israel, are overthrown,—in consternation like that, under which the host of Midian sank down amidst carnage that they inflicted on themselves (cp. *v.* 18; Ezek. xxxviii. 21). They are self-consumed; for 'wickedness blazeth forth as fire,...and the people become as fuel of fire' (*vv.* 17, 18). This is the righteous decree of Him, whose 'jealousy' (*v.* 7) will not allow Israel to continue in rebellion against its one gracious Lord. The paganized, Ishmaelized (see on ii. 6, iii. 18, 19), city and people are therefore laid low; that the true Israel may be delivered.—*For all violence suffereth violence amidst crashing noise, and garments are rolling in bloodshed; and it* (the whole mass) *shall be for burning*, (shall be) *fuel of fire.*" Cp. Symm. ὅτι πᾶσα βία ἐβιάσθη ἐν σεισμῷ, καὶ περιβολαῖον ἐφύρη ἐν αἵματι· καὶ ἔσται εἰς καῦσιν, καὶ κατάβρωμα πυρός.

NOTE C. (ON *v.* 6.)

1. The two words are separated by the accents.

2. The phrase פְּרָא אָדָם cannot be adduced as a reason for joining the words; it would, at the most, prove the *possibility* of doing so. But it scarcely does even that: since its real meaning is "a *human* wild-ass."

3. "Wonderful Counsellor" would rather be מִפְלִיא עֵצָה (xxviii. 29), or יוֹעִץ פֶּלֶא.

CHAPTER X.

1 *The woe of tyrants.* 5 *Assyria, the rod of hypocrites, for his pride shall be broken.* 20 *A remnant of Israel shall be saved.* 24 *Israel is comforted with promise of deliverance from Assyria.*

1 Or, *to the writers that write grievousness.*

WOE unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and [1] that write grievousness *which* they have prescribed;

2 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and *that* they may rob the fatherless!

CHAP. X. 1. The prophet once more points out (cp. iii. 14, 15, v. 7, 23) how, amidst pretended adherence to the formalities of justice, there was gross violation of right. The rulers gave forth *unrighteous decrees.*

and that write...] Rather, *and* **to writers who prescribe oppression**;—to those who, being the professional interpreters of the law, gave iniquitous legal decisions.

2. *To turn aside...*] xxix. 21; Amos v. 12; Prov. xviii. 5; cp. Job xxiv. 4.

to take away] Or, *to* **tear away**. It is a strong word; rendered by A. V. in Eccl.

3 And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation *which* shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

4 Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. [a] For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

5 ¶ ‖O [†]Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, ‖and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

6 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and [†]to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

7 Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but *it is* in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

8 [b] For he saith, *Are* not my princes altogether kings?

9 *Is* not Calno as Carchemish? *is*

[a] chap. 5. 25. & 9. 12.
‖Or, *Woe to the Assyrian.*
[†]Heb. *Asshur.*
‖Or, *though.*
[†]Heb. *to lay them a treading.*
[b] 2 Kin. 18. 24, 33. & 19. 10. &c.

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v. 8 (7), "violent perverting." (Cp. iii. 14; lxi. 8.)

their prey...may rob] Rather, *that widows may be their* **plunder**, *and that they may* **spoil** *orphans.* The words are the same that occur in the name Maher-shalal-hash-baz, viii. 1: and in *v.* 6 below.

Yes;—that was why Asshur was let loose upon them to plunder and to spoil. Asshur was but the rod in the hand of Retributive Justice; meting out the law, εἰ κε πάθοι τά κ' ἔρεξε.

3. *in the day of visitation*] LXX. ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Cp. 1 Peter ii. 12. See also Job xxxi. 14; Jer. xiii. 21, xxiii. 12; Luke xix. 44.

in the desolation] The sudden, loud, crash of ruin (xlvii. 11; Prov. i. 27, iii. 25).

shall come from far] yet swiftly, v. 26.

for help] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 37, 38.

where will ye leave your glory?] leave it, to be kept for you as a deposit.—Once Israel had known where to find such a place of security (Ps. x. 14, *s. fin.*). Now their glory would "flee away as a bird" (Hos. ix. 11).

4. *Without me*] Apart from Me; if they have not Me to flee to. (Cp. the use of the word in Hos. xiii. 4.) So Kimchi, Vitringa, and others.

The sense is not materially different if (with Delitzsch and Ewald) we render; "It only remains that they...;"—this is the only thing that they can now do. (Cp. the use of the word in Num. xi. 6; Dan. xi. 18.)

they shall bow down under the prisoners (sinking, for very shame and self-reproach, lower than other captives), **or** *they* **lie prostrate** *under the slain* (cp. xiv. 19).

5—34. Judgment has "begun at the house of God." But the instrument employed to execute the divine sentence shall not escape a like punishment, if it sin in like manner (cp. Jer. xxv. 29, li. 24): for "there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. ii. 11).

5. *O Assyrian*] Rather, **Ho** (or, Woe to). Cp. xvii. 12, xviii. 1.

There are two views presented of the Assyrian in these chapters. Really, he was a rod or staff in God's hand, wielded by His righteous anger (x. 15). In his own self-deifying thoughts, he smote the nations with a sceptre that was all his own (ix. 4, x. 24). These two views are both alluded to, by a rapid transition, in this verse.

Ho *Assyrian! the rod* (Ps. lxxxix. 32) *of My anger!* **Yea,** *the* **very** *staff in their hand is My indignation.* Vulg. "*et baculus ipse* in manibus eorum."

Asshur, Assyria or "the Assyrian," includes both king and people;—although, no doubt, the national sentiment found its fullest expression eventually in Sennacherib, who appears to be referred to prophetically in some parts of this chapter.

6. *Against* **a profane** (ix. 17, *s. w.*) *nation will I send him;*—so that Sennacherib's words in xxxvi. 10 did represent a real truth, though in his mouth they may have been vain boasting.

the people of my wrath] On whom my wrath (ix. 19, *s. w.*) is now to be poured out. Cp. xxxiv. 5; Jer. vii. 29.

to take...] Rather, **to gather plunder and carry off spoil:**—see on *v.* 2 (*s. w.*).

to tread them down...] See on v. 5. Cp. Ps. xviii. 42; ch. v. 25.

7. *he meaneth not so*] He *imagines*, or pictures to himself, something very different from this:—he fancies that he is working out his own will.

to destroy] Rather (since it is not connected with "nations"), **to work destruction.** The king of pride meant utterly to destroy the life of the nation;—God's design was "to destroy the sinners out of it" (xiii. 9: cp. Amos ix. 8).

This uprooting of conquered nations was a new thing in the world; devised by Assyria as a means of carrying out that *imperial* policy, which originated with it;—as if it were bent on realizing the dream of the old Babel-builders.

8. *Are not my princes altogether kings?*]—

not Hamath as Arpad? *is* not Samaria as Damascus?

10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, *that* when the Lord hath performed his whole work [c] upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will [†] punish the fruit [†] of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

13 For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done *it*, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants [‖] like a valiant *man:*

14 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs *that are* left,

[c] 2 Kin. 19. 31.
[†] Heb. *visit upon.*
[†] Heb. *of the greatness of the heart.*
[‖] Or, *like many people.*

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so that he was styled "the great King" (xxxvi. 4), "King of princes" (Hos. viii. 10; cp. Ezek. xxv. 7; Dan. ii. 37; Ezra vii. 12). Cp. 2 K. xxv. 28.

Obs. The scheme of founding a Universal Empire would go on, in other hands, until He came, who alone was "King of kings" (Rev. xvii. 14, xix. 16; cp. Dan. ii. 47, viii. 25).

9. Cp. xxxvi. 19, 20, xxxvii. 12, 13. Kalno, doubtless the "Kalneh" of Gen. x. 10, Amos vi. 2 (cp. Ezek. xxviii. 3), is Ctesiphon; on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite Seleucia.

Carchemish] (2 Chro. xxxv. 20). At the junction of the Chaboras and Euphrates.

Hamath] (Gen. x. 18). Called "Great Hamath" in Amos vi. 2;—still a considerable city, on the banks of the Orontes.

Arpad] Never mentioned apart from Hamath: xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13; Jer. xlix. 23.

is not Samaria as Damascus?] Damascus was taken by Tiglath-Pileser about the 3rd or 4th year of Ahaz, and its people carried away to Kir (2 K. xvi. 9). Samaria had not yet suffered that extremity (*v.* 10); but was she not as entirely at the disposal of Assyria as Damascus had been?

10. The conqueror's advance, from Calno on the Tigris, by Carchemish on the Euphrates, by Hamath and Arpad on the Orontes, to Damascus and Samaria, is not meant to stop at Samaria. Its goal is—Jerusalem.

As my hand hath found (**reached**) *the kingdoms of the idols*] "Idol-gods" (ii. 8, 18, *s. w.*); which, to his thought, occupied much the same relations to Bel, that the various subject kings did to himself.

did excel] in number, and in artistic qualities;—according to Ahaz, in efficacy as well (2 Chro. xxviii. 23).

11. The premises in *v.* 10 might lead one to expect,—"Can I not do what I will with the kingdoms of Samaria and Jerusalem?" But, as he had already carried away a portion of the population of the northern kingdom, it was only necessary to point his inference at Jerusalem.

unto Samaria and her idols (**gods**)*...to Jerusalem and her idols* (**images**)] The word for "images" means literally, "grievous things." (Cp. note on Ps. xvi. 4.)

12. *Wherefore*] Or, **But.**—The actual issue shall be something beyond what he anticipates.

hath performed (or, **finished**) *his whole work*] His work of disciplinary correction, xxviii. 21. The "stout-hearted" Assyrian was employed in this work, because the sin to be corrected was "stoutness of heart" (ix. 9).

I will punish...] Or, "hold judgment on." The *fruit* of his stoutness of heart was cruelty, unrestrained lust of empire, and blasphemy.

the glory] Or, **vaunting** (cp. *v.* 15).

high looks] Lit. "loftiness of eyes." (Cp. ii. 11.)

13. *and I have removed*] Rather, *and* **I remove.** He speaks of it as a customary thing with him.

the bounds of the people] Or, **the boundaries of the peoples**; the land-marks of peoples, nations, and languages, fixed by Him who scattered mankind from Babel. (Cp. Deut. xxxii. 8; Acts xvii. 26.)

their treasures] all that they have been accumulating for after-time; so that they shall have no political future. All the elements of slowly attained national development are ruthlessly swept away.

and I have put down] Or, *and I* **bring down,** *like* **a mighty one, them that are on thrones.** Vulg. "in sublime residentes."

14. *my hand hath found* (**reached**), *as* (**in**) *a nest, the riches of the people*] **The wealth of the peoples.**—So feeble was their resistance.

eggs that are left] Abandoned by the parent bird.

have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

15 Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? *or* shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? ‖ as if the rod should shake *itself* against them that lift it up, *or* as if the staff should lift up ‖ *itself, as if it were* no wood.

‖ Or, *as if a rod should shake them that lift it up.* ‖ Or, that which is *not wood.*

16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

18 And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, † both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

† Heb. *from the soul and even to the flesh.*

19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be † few, that a child may write them.

† Heb. *number.*

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house

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all the earth] Cp. xiii. 5, xiv. 7; cp. xxxvii. 18; Hab. ii. 5; Jer. li. 7.

that moved the wing...] There was not even so much show of opposition as an unfledged brood might make; "none fluttered a wing, or opened a beak, or **chirped**" (*s. w. a.* viii. 19).

15. *Shall the axe boast* (**vaunt**) *itself against*] (Judg. vii. 2). The verb here corresponds to the noun in *v.* 12:—as also the "magnify itself" of the next clause to the "stoutness (lit. greatness, or magnificence) of heart" in the same verse.

him that shaketh it] Or, "that moveth it to and fro."

as if the rod] Or, **as though** *a rod* **were to move them to and fro** *that lift it up,* **as though** *a staff* **were to** *lift up* (them that are) **not** *wood;*—"not-wood" meaning, the very contrast of wood, as in xxxi. 8, "Asshur shall fall by the sword of *not-man,*" that is, of One, who is quite different from man. (Cp. Deut. xxxii. 21; Jer. v. 7.)

16. *the Lord*] HA-ADON;—the Supreme Judge (i. 24, iii. 1), who is also Sovereign Ruler, *the Lord of Hosts,*—ADONAY-SEBAOTH (here only. In *vv.* 23, 24, it is *Adonay Yahveh Sebaoth*).

shall...send] Or, **send forth** (cp. *v.* 6); as His commissioned agent.

leanness] Or, "a withering sickness" (Ps. cvi. 15). Cp. xvii. 4.

shall kindle] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 22.

17. *the light of Israel*] He, who, being in His nature pure Light (1 John i. 5), makes the light of His grace to shine on the true Israel. But, when this is brought into contact with sin, holy Love becomes consuming fire.

his thorns and his briers] So that he is to share in Israel's punishment, ix. 18;—for the sin of both was the same. (See on *v.* 12; and cp. ix. 18 with x. 34.)

18. *forest...fruitful field*] The "fruitful field" (in xxxvii. 34, "Carmel") seems to be, land covered with vineyards, oliveyards, &c. In xxix. 17, xxxii. 15, 16 "forest" and "fruitful field" are contrasted: here and in xxxvii. 24 (cp. Micah vii 14) they are combined.

The "thorns and briers" catch fire first; but the flames spread to the noble forest-trees and the richly cultured land.

both soul and body] Hebr. "from soul and even to flesh;"—as by a deadly malady, which, laying hold first of the vital powers, afterwards works outwardly upon the bodily frame.

and they (**it**) *shall be as when a standard-bearer* (lix. 19, *s. w.*) *fainteth*]—and, in consequence, the whole line of battle melts away in panic (Kimchi). Cp. xxxi. 8, 9.

19. *And the rest*] Or, **remnant** (*s. w. a.* in *vv.* 20, 21, 22).

The transition to the following verse is made through this word "remnant." If proud Assyria were thus cut down, proud Israel must be so too (*v.* 12). Its "house of the forest of Lebanon" (1 K. x. 17, 21, vii. 2; cp. ch. ix. 18, xxii. 8; Jer. xxi. 14), its rich Carmel also, must be consumed.

Obs. Many other terms in the section, *vv.* 16—19, are very specially applicable to Israel. Thus; "his fat ones" (Ps. lxxviii. 31), "leanness" (ch. xxiv. 16), "his glory" (v. 13, 14), "burning" (Deut. xxxii. 22), "a fire" (Deut. ix. 3); "thorns and briers" (ch. v. 6, vii. 24, ix. 18); "his forest and his Carmel" (of Jerusalem, xxxvii. 24); "shall consume" (*vv.* 22, 23); "standard-bearer" (lix. 19; cp. Ps. lx. 4); "remnant" (*vv.* 20, 21, 22). Compare remarks on *vv.* 33, 34.

20. *the remnant...escaped*] Hezekiah seems to refer to this verse in the invitation, which he sent to the northern tribes, to come to the passover, 2 Chro. xxx. 6:—"Ye sons of Israel, return to the Lord,...that He may return to *the remnant of you that are escaped* out of the hand of the kings of Assyria." (Cp. ch. xxviii. 5.)

of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

21 The remnant shall return, *even* the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

22 [d]For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, *yet* a [†]remnant of them shall return: [e]the consumption decreed shall overflow [‖]with righteousness.

23 [f]For the Lord GOD of hosts shall make a consumption, even de-

[d] Rom. 9. 27. [†] Heb. *in*, or, *amongst*. [e] chap. 28. 22. [‖] Or, *in*. [f] chap. 28. 22.

Yet xi. 11, 16 shews that we can only look on that brief period of repentance as a historical type of a far larger restoration.

stay] Or, **stay themselves.**—They shall no more lean for support on the Assyrian; who only adds to their misery (2 Chro. xxviii. 20).

in truth] In sincerity (xxxviii. 3, xlviii. 1; 1 S. xii. 24; *s. w.*).

21. *The remnant shall return*] Heb. SHEARYASHUB, vii. 3. They shall return in penitence (see on i. 27. Cp. xliv. 22, lv. 7; 1 K. viii. 33, 35, 47, 48. Hos. v. 4, vi. 1).

unto the mighty God] *s. w. a.* ix. 6.

22. The prophet, being about to utter a divine mystery, turns and addresses God; using words, which remind us of Solomon's prayer (*Thy people Israel*, 1 K. viii. 30, 33, 38, 41, 52; cp. Deut. xxi. 8; 2 S. vii. 24).

The verse appears to look back to the similarly enigmatical passage Hos. i. 9, 10:—where the sentence on Israel, "Ye are not My people," is followed immediately by a prediction that "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered."

Ephraim was soon to be cut off "from being a people" (vii. 8). It should lose its name, and be scattered across the Gentile world;—not, however, to perish; but (in accordance with that mysterious oracle, Gen. xlviii. 16, 19) to "multiply like fish in the midst of the earth," and to "become the fulness of the nations."

But *all* were not to be thus swept away to multiply out of sight. The visible Church should remain visible, even on the plains of Babylonia;—as witness that scene in the province of Dura. In due time the "remnant," who returned to their God, would be brought back to their land (Jer. iv. 1); and, when He should be born among them, whose title was "The Mighty God," a remnant should *return* and claim their portion *in Him* (see below), and *by Him* should *be restored* to the favour of their God.

Obs. 1. In quoting this verse (Rom. ix. 27), St Paul used the remarkable words, "Isaiah *crieth on behalf of* Israel" (κράζει ὑπὲρ); as if it were the Spirit of adoption "crying out" in him (ib. viii. 15), claiming for Israel its privilege of "adoption" (ib. ix. 4).

This explains the sudden change in the form of the address,—"*Thy people* Israel,"—noticed above.

Obs. 2. The promise of a seed as vast "as the sand of the sea," given to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 17, cp. xxxii. 12), shall be fulfilled for good, when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (xi. 9). Its apparent realization under Solomon (1 K. iv. 20) was deceptive (cp. on ix. 3). That worldly prosperity only led Israel astray;—turned them into mere Midianites (Judg. vii. 12), who wasted and oppressed God's heritage and must be cut off by "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

a remnant of them shall return] Rather, "a remnant shall return (*i.e.* be restored, 1 S. vii. 14) by Him" or "through Him" (Hos. xii. 6, H. 7; cp. ib. i. 7; Ps. lvi. 4).

the consumption decreed] The doom which subjects Israel to *consumption*, to "failing (*s. w.*) of eyes" (Deut. xxviii. 65) and utter loss of all it holds dearest on earth; this doom, already *decreed*—clearly determined (cp. 1 K. xx. 40), sharp and incisive (xli. 15, *s. w.*), irrevocably fixed (Joel iii. 14, H. iv. 14, *s. w.*)—

shall overflow with righteousness] Better (as marg. A. V.), **in** *righteousness*. That severe doom shall advance as an irresistible deluge (cp. viii. 8, xxviii. 2, 15); but it is sent "in righteousness," from Him who, when He purged the Old World by the righteous judgment of a baptismal flood (cp. liv. 9), saved righteous Noah in the ark to be the "heir of righteousness" (Heb. xi. 7).

Obs. While the proud mountains of Israel were submerged in that deluge, there was an upheaval of the surrounding Gentile world out of the dark waters, which had covered them;—so that Israel's "abasement was the riches of the nations" (Rom. xi. 12).

23. *For...a consumption, even determined*] Rather, *For* **a final work and a decisive doth the Lord...execute.** The dependence of this verse on the preceding is more obvious in the Hebrew; since the words rendered "the consumption decreed," in *v.* 22, have a close verbal relation to those represented by "a final work and a decisive." This expression occurs again in xxviii. 22; "For a

termined, in the midst of all the land.

24 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, ‖and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of [g] Egypt.

‖ Or, *but he shall lift up his staff for thee.*

[g] Exod. 14.

25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of [h] Midian at the rock of Oreb: and *as* his rod *was* upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

[h] Judg. 7. 25. chap. 9. 4.

27 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* his burden [†] shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

[†] Heb. *shall remove.*

28 He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages:

29 They are gone over the pas-

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final (sentence) and a decisive have I heard (proceeding) from the Lord, the Lord of Hosts." It is found once more in Dan. ix. 27 (cp. *v.* 26, and xi. 36); where it seems to apply the doom of excision, which lighted first on the ten tribes, to persistently impenitent Judah.

in the midst of all the land] vi. 12, xxiv. 13. Or, *of the whole earth* (cp. xxviii. 22),—so that its effect shall extend *throughout* the earth; Ps. lxxiv. 12; ch. xix. 24. Cp. Micah v. 8. LXX. ἐν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ὅλῃ.

24. *Therefore*]—Since the great invasion is of God's own ordering.

O my people] Cp. Hos. i. 7; where, after *Israel's* rejection, it is said of Judah, "I will save them by the Lord, *their God*."

be not afraid] Already anticipating the Book of Consolation (chh. xl—lxvi), in which the phrase often recurs: xli. 10, 13, xliii. 1, 5, xliv. 2. Cp. xxxvii. 6.

he shall smite] Rather, **though he** *smite.*

after the manner of Egypt] As Egypt did (cp. Ezek. xx. 30, *s. w.*). In *v.* 26 it means, "as was done to Egypt" (cp. Amos iv. 10, *s. w.*). In lii. 4, Asshur and Egypt are placed together as Israel's oppressors.

25. *yet a very little while*] xvi. 14, xxix. 17 (only). Cp. xxvi. 10, liv. 7, 8.

the indignation...] Or, **there shall be an end of indignation** (xxvi. 20, xxx. 27) **and My anger shall be to their destruction.** (Cp. Dan. xi. 36.) The anger, of which they have been the executioners, shall then be turned against their own arrogance and impiety.

26. *shall stir up...for him*] Or, *shall stir up* **against** *him.*

according to...] Or, **as Midian was smitten.** (Cp. on ix. 4.)

Oreb (="Raven," Gen. viii. 7), after escaping from that night of horrors, was overtaken and slain on a rock, to which (it would seem) he had fled for refuge. Similarly, Sennacherib, after his escape, was slain in the house of his god (xxxvii. 38; 2 Chro. xxxii. 21).

upon the sea] The swelling waves of the Assyro-Babylonian deluge;—or (more generally), the sea of troubles, which threatened to drown Judah. (Cp. xliii. 2; Ps. lxvi. 6; Zech. x. 11.)

after the manner of Egypt] As He did to Egypt, when He "wounded the dragon" (li. 9).

27. *shall be taken away*] Or, *shall* **depart**; as if spontaneously.

his yoke...neck] Deut. xxviii. 48. Cp. Nahum i. 13.

and the yoke...] Or, **yea,** *the yoke shall be destroyed* **from before** *the anointing* (or, oil); —before the virtue of that consecration of David's line, of which we read—"With My holy oil (*s. w.*) have I anointed Him. The enemy shall not exact upon Him. I will beat down His foes before His face. His throne is as the sun before Me" (Ps. lxxxix. 20, 22, 23, 36).

The efficacy of that consecration of the Son of God, as King of Zion (Ps. ii. 6), had not yet been withdrawn from Judah. As soon as Hezekiah renewed his fealty, its power was again exhibited; so that the iron yoke of Assyria was broken to atoms.

The Targ. has, "The nations shall be broken from before the Messiah." If any proof were needed to shew that this is the only tenable interpretation, it is supplied by the frigid, or even absurdly grotesque, conceits, which have been put forth in modern times by such as have abandoned it.

Obs. It is admitted that Messiah is referred to in ch. xi;—and of Him it is said, that "with the breath of His mouth He shall slay the wicked."

28, 29. The prophet, in vision, beholds the invader moving towards Jerusalem. He sees him not following the ordinary route, the great north road; but striking across country in a line that is traversed by more than one

sage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.

30 † Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth.

† Heb. *Cry shrill with thy voice.*

31 Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

32 As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand *against* the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

33 Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature *shall be* hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled.

34 And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall ‖ by a mighty one.

‖ Or, *mightily.*

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deep ravine; hoping by a forced march to surprise Jerusalem.

The history does not enable us to say whether Sennacherib actually followed this route. Certain it is that, if he marched from Libnah (xxxvii. 8) by the pass of Bethhoron, he would emerge into the valley that lies between Ai and Michmash (cp. Josh. x. 10, 28, 29; 1 S. xiii. 5, 16, 18): and so here his line of march begins from *Ayyath*, or Ai (about three miles south of Bethel). Then *he has passed* by *Migron* ("the uttermost part of Gibeah," 1 S. xiv. 2, opposite to Michmash); "at Michmash he **will lay** up his **baggage**," to prepare for crossing the steep Wady Suweinat,—which he does by *the passage* (cp. 1 S. xiv. 4), a ridge of land (probably) running across the ravine from hill-side to hill-side. He lodges *at Geba* (Josh. xviii. 24; 1 S. xiii. 3). Ramah and Gibeah of Saul, looking from their heights into the valley and seeing the troops advancing, take to flight.

30. The prophet shares sympathetically in their alarm; and shouts to the towns that lie in a southerly direction:—*Gallim* (1 S. xxv. 44), &c.

cause it to be heard...] Rather, "**Listen, O Laisha!** thou poor one (liv. 11), Anathoth!"

31. *Madmenah*] **hath wandered away**, as a bird scared from her nest, xvi. 2; Jer. iv. 25.

gather themselves to flee] Hastily collect their property, to escape with it to some stronghold; Exod. ix. 19; Jer. iv. 6, vi. 1.

Obs. The Haftarah of the *eighth day of the* PASSOVER is x. 32—xii. 6.

32. *As yet...*] Or, "Within this very day, he will halt at Nob;" on the northern extremity of the Olivet line of hills; so that Jerusalem is all but in his grasp. After a short rest, he will have only to rear his standards, marshal his troops, and take possession of the terror-stricken city.

he shall shake his hand] Waving it with a triumphant menace; as if irresistible power must needs go forth from it (cp. xi. 15, xix. 16).

against the mount...] Or, "the mountain of the house in Zion, the hill-fort (cp. xxxi. 4) of Jerusalem." So the Kethiv.

The Keri, "mountain of the daughter of Zion," is probably taken from xvi. 1.

The Kethiv is supported by the occurrence of *the mountain of the house* in Micah iii. 12 (Jer. xxvi. 18); and by the Targ., "*the mountain of the house of the sanctuary* which is in Zion." (Cp. ch. ii. 2, 3, "The *mountain of the house of the Lord.*")

This, in fact, was the great aim of the Assyrian's ambition, to get possession of "the mountain of the congregation" (xiv. 13). Sennacherib's taunts were aimed at God Himself (xxxvii. 23, 28): as Hezekiah testified, when he took his insulting letter to *the house of the Lord.*

33. As he is in the attitude of triumph, he and his host are stricken down.

the Lord...] *Adonay Yahveh Sebaoth* (cp. on *v.* 16).

the bough] Or, "the leafy boughs." Nearly the same word is used in the picture of Assyria in Ezek. xxxi. 5, 6, 8, 12, 13.

with terror] Or, with a terrific stroke.

the haughty shall be humbled] (*s. w. a.* in ii. 11, v. 15). That moving forest of warriors should all—men and leaders alike—be laid low by one crashing blow.

34. *the thickets*] His serried battalions (ix. 18).

and Lebanon] With its proud cedars, "that are high and lifted up" (ii. 13). So in Ezek. xxxi. 3, "the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon."

shall fall by a mighty one] Or, **a glorious one** (*s. w. a.* xxxiii. 21; Ps. viii. 1, lxxvi. 4, xciii. 4). The absence of the article in such cases gives additional emphasis: "one who is indeed a glorious one." Cp. xxviii. 2.

Obs. As in *vv.* 19, 20 the transition from Assyria to redeemed Israel was made by the word *remnant*, so here a similar transition is made by means of the word "hewn down" (*v.* 33), with which the word rendered "stem" (or "stump") in xi. 1 is closely connected.

It is implied by the use of that word in xi. 1, that the noble tree of Jesse had been

CHAPTER XI.

1 *The peaceable kingdom of the Branch out of the root of Jesse.* 10 *The victorious restoration of Israel, and vocation of the Gentiles.*

1 AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of [a] Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

3 And shall make him of [†] quick understanding in the fear of the

[a] Acts 13. 23.

[†] Heb. *scent*, or, *smell.*

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hewn down;—almost as if x. 33, 34 had virtually included under its sentence corrupted Jerusalem, and its "mountain of the house," and "house of the forest" (cp. on *v.* 19).

In any case, there is a strongly marked contrast between the worldly power hewn down in x. 33, and the root of Jesse. For, when a cedar is cut down, it sends out no fresh suckers. When Asshur (or, when carnal Israel) fell, it perished. But not so, says ch. xi, shall it be with the hewn-down vine of Jesse. (Cp. vi. 13.)

For the following note I am indebted to Prof. Cowell, of Cambridge.

"The *cedar* is a PINE; and all pines, when cut down to the ground, are incapable of sending up suckers. Herodotus has a story (VI. 37) of Crœsus having threatened to destroy the men of Lampsacus, 'like a pine-tree;' whereat they were much perplexed, until an old man remarked that 'of all trees the pine, when it is once cut down, never grows again, but utterly perishes.' Bentley 'On Phalaris' has a chapter about this."

CHAP. XI. The towering cedar has disappeared for ever; but the vine planted by God's hand retains its vital strength and substance—"the Holy Seed." Of Him, "the root and the off-spring of David" (Rev. xxii. 16), this chapter speaks.

Even Knobel admits the reference to "Messiah," and pronounces that the notion of Hezekiah's being referred to (Aben-Ezra, Grotius, Dathe, and others) is untenable.

1. *there shall come forth*] Micah v. 2, H. 1 (*s. w.*).

a rod] Elsewhere only in Prov. xiv. 3.

out of the stem] Or, "stock" which has been left in the ground after the tree is cut down; xl. 24; Job xiv. 8. (Cp. on x. 34.)

That it should be from the hewn-down stock of *Jesse*, implied that the once ennobled line of David had sunk to the level of common life. The royal house of Zion had fallen back upon the family domain in Bethlehem.

Obs. In the neighbourhood of this domain, if not within it, Jesus was born.

and a Branch] Hebr. NETSER (*not* the word, used in iv. 2). LXX. ἄνθος (=Hebr. NETS); Aq. ἀκρέμων (=*a slender shoot*, or *twig*). The word occurs only here and in xiv. 19, lx. 21; Dan. xi. 7.

Obs. Gesenius and Fürst derive the noun from a conjectured root meaning (like the Arab. *nasara*) "to be bright," or "verdant." This agrees with the Septuagintal ἄνθος, and with the character of the upland valley, in which the town *Nétser* (see Hengst. 'Christol.' II), or Natsoreth, stands:—where the birth of "the Son of David" was announced by the angel Gabriel. "The hills have a rugged aspect, the white limestone cropping up everywhere in jagged points and bold bluffs and bare crowns; but the bushes and aromatic shrubs, and *especially the brilliant wild flowers* that spring up from the scanty soil,...take away from the bleakness of the landscape." (Dr Porter, in Kitto's 'B. D.').

shall grow out of his roots] Or, **out of his roots shall be fruitful** (xlv. 8), Del. Slight in its commencement (cp. liii. 2), it shall eventually produce "the fruit of the earth, excellent and beauteous" (iv. 2, cp. Ezek. xvii. 22, 23).

Obs. The verb ("shall be fruitful") is that from which the name *Ephrathah* (Micah v. 2), "fruitful," is derived. So that the second clause of this verse may be said to contain *verbal* references to both Nazareth and Bethlehem.

2. This scion from Jesse's roots, like the "Servant of the Lord" in xlii. 1 and the Anointed of lxi. 1, has "*the Spirit of the Lord*" resting "*upon Him.*"

shall rest] (Cp. Num. xi. 25; 2 K. ii. 15). In Him the Spirit of the Lord should have an abiding *resting-place*. His sacred body would be the true Temple, in which "the fulness of the Godhead" should dwell (Col. ii. 9). The Son of David would be the final tabernacle, of which the words could be truly used, *This shall be my rest for ever* (Ps. cxxxii. 14). Cp. John i. 33.

Three pairs of spiritual virtues now follow.

of wisdom and understanding] In Him Israel's ideal would be realized; for Israel was called to exhibit before all nations a model of *wisdom and understanding* (Deut. iv. 6, *s. w.*); so that mankind might at length be stricken with a conviction of the beauty of holy obedience, and say; "Surely this great nation is *a wise and understanding people.*" LXX. σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως; *s. w. a.* Col. i. 9; cp. ii. 3.

of counsel and might] (xxxvi. 5). Cp. ix. 6;

LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and ‖ reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall [b] smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

‖ Or, *argue.*

[b] Job 4. 9. 2 Thes. 2. 8.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6 [c] The wolf also shall dwell with [c] chap. 65. 25.

Counsellor, The mighty God. (These two qualities are combined with "wisdom" and "understanding" in Prov. viii. 14.)

of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD] So the accents, and so LXX. Others (Vitr., Del., &c.), "of the knowledge and fear of the Lord."

The word "knowledge" is, however, used absolutely in xxxiii. 6, xl. 14, xliv. 19; Ps. xciv. 10; Prov. i. 7, ii. 6, x. 14; Mal. ii. 7, &c. (Cp. ch. liii. 11.)

3. *shall make him of quick understanding*] Lit. "of quick scent:" so that gracious deeds, which the world can scarcely perceive at all (Mark xii. 43), are to Him as "sweet odours" (cp. Phil. iv. 18); while deeds of ostentatious piety are offensive as "smoke in His nostrils" (lxv. 5). (On the rendering, see Note A.) Others, "And the fear of the Lord shall be fragrance to Him." (Drechsl., Del., &c.)

in the fear of the LORD] That is, *in regard of* it. Wherever it exists, embodied in individual men,—or whatever, as an objective rule of action, it may prescribe,—piety is always quickly discerned by Him, and is to Him always like a sweet-scented odour.

He is so penetrated with the Spirit of the Lord that He is a discerner of spirits; not misled by outward appearances (cp. John vii. 24), or popular opinions; but having power to perceive what is invisible and inaudible. Thus He is fitted to fulfil the requirements of the True King, who "*shall rule in the fear of the Lord*" (2 S. xxiii. 3).

4. *shall he judge*]—shall see that their cause is not suppressed, but brought forward to be judged. (Cp. i. 17, 23.)

and reprove] Or, "plead" (Job xvi. 21).

the poor...the meek] The poor, who have no means of commending themselves to the *eye:* the meek, in whose mouth are no eloquent self-vindications to win the *ear*. (Cp. Ps. xlv. 4, lxxii. 2, 4, 12, 13.)

with the rod of his mouth] The royal word, which He utters, being instantly carried into effect. He needs no visible sceptre. Cp. Hos. vi. 5.

the wicked] Or, **the wicked one**,—the leader of rebellion against Christ's authority (cp. Ps. ix. 5, x. 2, 3, &c.; Hab. iii. 12). See 2 Thess. ii. 8, 9 (which looks back to Isaiah). The Targ., in the common editions, has *Armilos* (the enemy of Messiah).

Obs. Works like these are plainly divine; cp. Ps. xxxiii. 6.

5. *the girdle of his reins*] (v. 27, *s. w.*). Cp. Eph. vi. 14: "having your loins girt about with *truth*." "Girding" was in preparation for active exertion (Ps. xciii. 1).

6—9. The summing up of these verses in *v.* 9 seems to imply that the allegorical sense is the primary one. (Cp. v. 17, xxxv. 9.)

Yet this need not exclude a real fulfilment of the prophecy in the subordinate sphere of animal life. (So Hengst., Drechsl., Del.) To a mind which is not so enslaved by the actual facts of history that it dares not consider what the ideal order of nature may fairly be thought to demand, there is nothing unphilosophic in such an expectation. On the contrary,—reason itself requires us to cherish it. The existence of so many creatures, in which it might almost seem that bad passions or tempers were embodied, is of itself a perplexing phenomenon. It indicates an abnormal condition of the world; a state of temporary *frustration* (Rom. viii. 20) or corruption of nature; from which we may well believe it shall be emancipated, as soon as the Redeemer of mankind shall have fully established His kingdom of righteousness.

How gladly the human mind turns to contemplate such a change, is shewn by the fourth Eclogue of Virgil;—whether this were borrowed (ultimately) from the Hebrew Scriptures, or not.

Still we may well admit that the allegorical sense should here take precedence; for, in the actual order of renovation, too, the recovery of Man must come first. The paradisiacal state cannot be re-introduced so long as the wicked "lurks in ambush like a lion," or "ravens as a wolf," or "has the poison of asp under his lips." But, when "the wickedness of the wicked man has come to an end," the ban may at the same time be removed from the lower creation.

6. *The wolf also shall dwell* (or, sojourn as guest) *with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down* (in the same pastures) *with the kid*] It has been pointed out (Rev. J. G. Wood, 'Bible Animals,' p. 35) that, whilst the *wolf*, as a rule, attacks sheep-folds, a *leopard* can follow the goat along precipices, where no wolf would venture; and the *lion* will carry

the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the ‖ cockatrice' den.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10 ¶ And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the [d] Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be † glorious.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to

‖ Or, adder's.

[d] Rom. 15. 12.

† Heb. *glory.*

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off oxen, which neither leopard nor wolf could move.

a little child] For man will still retain his relative superiority over the lower animals.

7. *shall feed*] Or, "graze" (v. 17).

8. *of the asp*] Or, the cobra (Dr Tristram, 'N. H. of B.').

shall put his hand on] Or, spread his hand over, *the* **hole** *of the cockatrice*, or, the great viper, the "Daboia" (Tristr.).

9. *They shall not hurt...*] Or, *They shall* **do no evil, neither deal corruptly**. They are the same words that were used of Israel in i. 3.

in all my holy mountain] The Holy Land of the redeemed earth. (Cp. ii. 2—4.) There shall no longer be any rapacious world-empire (lion, bear, leopard, or other, Dan. vii. 4—7), when "the Son of Man" (ib. vii. 13) shall have established His dominion;—no "Leviathan," or "crooked Serpent," will any longer have power (xxvii. 1).

full of the knowledge of the LORD] and the recognition of His (now manifested) glory (Hab. ii. 14; ch. vi. 3).

as the waters cover the sea] That is, the ocean-bed (Kimchi). So vast, so deep, shall be the fulness of the divine glory which shall "clothe the earth" (Ps. civ. 6), after it has risen out of the deluge of righteous indignation (ch. x. 22).

Obs. This universal "knowledge of the Lord" is the fruit of the new covenant mediated by the Son of David, on whom "the spirit of knowledge" (*v.* 2) rested. Cp. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33.

10. *And...there shall be...*] More exactly, "And it shall come to pass in that day (*v.* 11, *s. w.*), **the** root of Jesse, which standeth for an ensign of **the peoples**, UNTO HIM..." The "shoot from the stock of Jesse" (*v.* 1) is at the same time its root (cp. Rev. xxii. 16, v. 5). He is the root of that rich olive-tree, into which the Gentiles are grafted (Rom. xi. 17, 18).

He "stands" immoveably, as "an ensign to the peoples" (xlix. 22); not summoning them to war (Exod. xvii. 15), but drawing them to Himself as the fountain of salvation (Num. xxi. 9, *s. w.*), the "Prince of Peace" (cp. John xii. 32).

to it shall the Gentiles seek] "Unto Him shall the **nations** seek;" for (viii. 19) He is their God; His law and testimony are their only oracles.

his rest shall be glorious] Or, **His resting-place** (lxvi. 1, *s. w.*) **shall be glory**. The spot on which the glory of the Shekinah settled, was called its "resting-place" (Num. x. 33; cp. 2 Chro. vi. 41; Ps. cxxxii. 8, 14). But where God made His glory to abide, His people might dwell safely; and so the Holy Land also might have the name of "rest" (Deut. xii. 9). But Canaan itself was only a historical type of the future "redeemed inheritance,"—the earth filled with the glory of God. Meantime Messiah's own "resting-place" is the divine "glory" on high. Thither all true-hearted disciples are drawn, as to their centre of blessedness (Col. iii. 1); and thence they receive "rest to their souls" (Matt. xi. 28, 29).

The LXX. has καὶ ἡ ἀνάπαυσις αὐτοῦ, τιμή. Cp. 1 Pet. ii. 7.

11. While the nations are invited into the Church, there shall be a signal ingathering of Israel as well.

Obs. There was such an ingathering at the commencement of the Church's history on the day of Pentecost; when devout Israelites from Parthia and Media, from Elam and Mesopotamia, from Egypt and Libya and Arabia, from Rome and Crete and Pontus (Acts ii. 9—11), heard it proclaimed that Jesus of Nazareth (*v.* 22) had ascended into the heavens, to sit at God's right hand. We are taught to look for another larger fulfilment of the prophecy (Rom. xi. 26).

shall set his hand again] Cp. Exod. xiii. 3, 9, 14, 16; Deut. vi. 21; Ps. xliv. 2.

to recover] Or, **purchase**, *s. w. a.* Exod.

recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four † corners of the earth.

† Heb. *wings.*

13 The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward

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xv. 16; Deut. xxxii. 6; Ps. lxxiv. 2 (cp. on i. 3).

which shall be left] Left surviving that deluge of judgment. It is the word used of Noah, in Gen. vii. 23. (Cp. iv. 3, xxiv. 6, xlix. 21.) According to the accents (supported by Ezra i. 4; Exod. x. 5) we are to render, "which shall be left from (or, out of) Asshur, &c." (as in *v.* 16); that is, which shall have survived the oppression of Asshur, &c.

from Egypt] Cp. Deut. xxviii. 68.

Pathros] (Ezek. xxix. 14) is Upper Egypt: —*Kush* (in xxxvii. 9, *Ethiopia*) is Nubia and Abyssinia (Targ. *India*):—*Elam* (xxi. 2, xxii. 6), Persia:—*Shinar* (Gen. xi. 2), the country around Babylon. For *Hamath* see x. 9.

the islands of the sea] (xxiv. 14). The word rendered "islands" occurs in Gen. x. 5, of the lands colonized by the sons of Japhet. It seems to denote more especially the lands on the coast of the Mediterranean. (Cp. Ps. lxxii. 10; Jer. ii. 10; Esther x. 1.)

Obs. It is evident that the prophet has long ago realized to himself what he had foretold in vi. 12;—the land forsaken and the people carried away into remote countries. He speaks indeed as if only sporadic portions of the nation survived.

12. *And he shall set up*] Or, **lift up**, *s. w. a.* v. 26.

and shall assemble...] Rather, *shall* **gather** *the outcast* (sons) *of Israel, and* **collect the scattered** (daughters) *of Judah.*

"And so *all* Israel shall be saved" (Rom. xi. 26).

13. Ephraim, the chief heir of Joseph's primogeniture (Gen. xlviii. 19; 1 Chro. v. 2), after having had the ark of God in its keeping at Shiloh for 400 years, could not brook the transference of it to the tribe of Judah, which God had chosen (Ps. lxxviii. 68) to be the line from which the "Shiloh" should come (cp. John iv. 22). But now—

The envy (or, **jealousy**) *also of Ephraim shall depart*] That servile yoke shall be removed (x. 27) for ever. Ephraim will then know that He who sprang from Judah is the world's Saviour, and their unchanging benefactor (Jer. xxxi. 20).

the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off] This (as Del. rightly insists) is the only sense the words will bear. Some, against the usage of the language, would render, "the hostile men of Judah;" led to do so by a wish to assimilate the second and fourth clauses of the verse:—the result being a feebly elongated verse, as unlike the manner of Isaiah as can well be.

The *adversaries of Judah* included not only the men of Ephraim, whose "jealousy" led them at last to engage in deadly feud with Judah, but also—worse enemies a hundredfold—Ahaz and his fellow-conspirators, who resisted God's counsel. *All* such should be "cut off" (xxix. 20; Micah v. 9; Ps. xxxvii. 2, 22, 28, 38, *s. w.*). They had no part in the kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Obs. The word rendered "adversaries" is the same that is used of Haman, the deadly *enemy of the Jews*, in Esther iii. 10, viii. 1, ix. 10, 24.

Ephraim shall not envy (**be jealous of**) *Judah*] but shall be ashamed of its former "jealousy of the people" of God's choice (xxvi. 11).

and Judah shall not vex (or, be at feud with) *Ephraim*] Ruled over by the "Prince of peace," Judah should live in amity even with its long "offended brother" (Prov. xviii. 19) Ephraim.

Obs. It was when Solomon was disloyal to his God, that "adversaries" sprang up against him both at home and abroad (1 K. xi. 14, 23, 26); so that he—surnamed of "peace"—was at feud with Jeroboam and "sought to kill him."—Under the true Solomon, Judah could have no adversaries raised up against her, and could not be at feud. All "malice and jealousies" would depart (1 Pet. ii. 1), and only brotherly love "abide" (Heb. xiii. 1).

14. *But...*] **And** *they shall fly*, from those distant lands of exile (lx. 8, *s. w.*); and shall alight after their flight, *upon the shoulder*, or, frontier district (cp. Josh. xv. 11, *s. w.*), *of the Philistines westward*, or, seaward.—

† Heb. *the children of the east.* the west; they shall spoil † them of the east together: † they shall lay † Heb. *Edom and Moab* shall be *the laying on of their hand.* their hand upon Edom and Moab; † and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

15 And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; ‡ Heb. *the children of Ammon their obedience.* and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over † dryshod.

† Heb. *in shoes.*

16 And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; ᵉ like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

ᵉ Exod. 14. 29.

The LXX. (giving the *general* sense) περασθήσονται ἐν πλοίοις ἀλλοφύλων.

they shall spoil them of the east together] **together they shall spoil the children of the east**, the Ishmaelites, Midianites, &c. (Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10); cp. ch. ii. 6.

The symbolical language may have been drawn from the conquests of David. The spoil taken by him from "Syria and Moab, and the children of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek," was consecrated to the Lord (2 S. viii. 11, 19); Edom became his servant (ib. 14); and he "ruled over *all Israel*," and "*executed judgment and justice* (ch. ix. 7) for all his people."

they shall lay...] Lit. "Moab and Edom shall be the stretching forth of their hand," ready to be employed as their instruments (so the parallelism seems to require us to take it); "and the children of Ammon their attendance," or officers in waiting (2 S. xxiii. 23).

15. *utterly destroy*] Lit. "lay under a ban." LXX. ἐρημώσει, Aq., S., Th. ἀναθεματίσει.

the tongue of the Egyptian sea] The Gulf of Suez—which in old time had witnessed God's "marvellous things" (Micah vii. 14).

with his mighty wind] Or, "the force of His breath" (cp. *v.* 4). Vulg. "in fortitudine spiritus sui." LXX. ἐν πνεύματι βιαίῳ. (Cp. Acts ii. 2.)

shake his hand] with no ineffectual threatening (cp. x. 32, xix. 16).

over the river] (xxvii. 12). Euphrates; symbol of the Assyro-Babylonish empire, (viii. 7). Cp. Rev. xvi. 12.

and shall smite it in the...] Rather, **into** *seven streams, and shall* **let men walk** *dryshod.* Egypt and Assyria (when the prophet wrote, the two mightiest powers in the known world) should both of them have their power broken. Their limits should disappear, and so, in fact, the whole circle of heathendom should be placed in communication with the Holy Land—the centre of Messiah's kingdom. Cp. Ps. lxxxvii. 4, "Rahab and Babel."

16. *an highway*] A levelled and embanked road, *s. w. a.* xix. 23, xlix. 11, lxii. 10.

which shall be left] See on *v.* 11.

like as it was] Or, "even as there was." Cp. li. 10, lxiii. 12, 13.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 3.)

The rendering of A.V. may be fairly justified by the analogy of the verb הבין; which has generally a simple transitive meaning, "to understand;" yet sometimes signifies to "cause to understand" (Job vi. 24), or, "to give understanding" (ib. xxxii. 8). Similarly הריח, though it commonly means "to smell," may signify, "to give him quick scent."

CHAPTER XII.

A joyful thanksgiving of the faithful for the mercies of God.

AND in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me,

CHAP. XII. The prophet now addresses the ransomed and in-gathered people.

As Israel at the Exodus sang a joyful anthem to their Saviour, so shall they "*in* that day" of final recovery (cp. on *v.* 2).

1. *I will praise thee*] Or, "**thank** Thee;" lit. "confess unto Thee."

though] Lit. **because.** LXX. διότι ὠργίσθης μοι.

They recognize the fact that their suffering had arisen from God's just anger. The oppressor's staff was only an instrument of God's ordaining. They can even thank Him for His severe discipline: which would not let them glide on smoothly to ruin. His wrath was but the "jealousy" of true love (ix. 7).

thou comfortedst me] *s. w. a.* xl. 1, xlix. 13, lxi. 2.

The Targ. paraphrases: "I will confess before Thee, O Lord, for, because I have sinned, Thine anger is upon me; but, when I return to the law, Thine anger *will turn* from me, and Thou *wilt have* mercy upon me." Simi-

thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the [a] LORD JEHOVAH *is* my [a] strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

4 And in that day shall ye say, [b] Praise the LORD, ‖ call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.

6 Cry out and shout, thou † inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

[a] Exod. 15. 2. Psal. 118. 14.

[b] 1 Chron. 16. 8. Psal. 105. 1.

‖ Or, *proclaim his name.*

† Heb. *inhabitress.*

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larly Cocceius: "I confess to Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast been angry with me: oh *let* Thy anger *turn away*, and *comfort Thou me.*"

2. The latter half of the verse is from Exod. xv. 2, with but one variation—the sacred name is reduplicated, YAH YAHVEH. This combination occurs elsewhere only in xxvi. 4.

The same quotation from Exod. xv. 2 is found in the last of the Psalms in the Paschal "Halleluyah," Ps. cxviii. 14.

3. The A.V. (*Therefore...*) seems to have taken this verse as part of the song. It is better to view it as part of the prophet's address:—**And ye shall** *draw water with* **gladness.**

After their long wandering in the desert—"the whole staff of water broken" (iii. 1)—they were now brought to the Holy Zion, the City that had in it fountains of living water (Ps. lxxxvii. 7).

The Targ. "Ye shall receive with joy a new doctrine from the chosen of the righteous."

Obs. The water was that which they had once rejected—the water of "Shiloah" (viii. 6)—the teaching and work and spiritual grace of Him who said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" (John vii. 37).

4. *Praise*] Or, **Give thanks to** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 1).

call upon] Or (as in marg.), **proclaim.**

among the people] **Peoples.** This is quoted from the psalm which was sung at the location of the ark in Zion: 1 Chro. xvi. 8.

exalted] *s. w. a.* ii. 11, 17, xxxiii. 5; Ps. cxlviii. 13.

5. *done excellent things*] Or, "wrought triumphantly" (cp. Exod. xv. 1); or, "majestically" (ch. xxvi. 10; Ps. xciii. 1, *s. w.*).

this is known] Rather, **worthy to be known**, and to be recognized (Kethiv); or, "worthy to be made known" (Keri).

6. *thou inhabitant*] Lit. "inhabitress:" the Church that dwells in Zion. (Cp. xl. 9.)

great...] Or, "great in the midst of thee (Zeph. iii. 15, 17) is the Holy One of Israel;" confessed now to be great, though in old time set at nought (i. 4, v. 19, 24). Cp. lx. 14.

Obs. Thus we are brought back in ch. xii to the vision of "the Holy One" in ch. vi.

There the people was sentenced to a period of judicial blindness and of exile: with a promise that a remnant should survive and return.

Now the King has been *seen:*—born of a virgin, yet IMMANUEL; a child, yet "the mighty God;" a slender shoot from the hewn-down stock of Jesse, yet a glorious standard, beneath whose protection the nations find rest.

This is the "excellent" work of God, which deserves to be published everywhere.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPS. XIII, XIV.

In order that the work of redemption may be achieved, the oppressor must be overthrown. That overthrow, foretold in xi. 4, had many precedent historical types; not only in individuals (as Pharaoh, Oreb, Sennacherib), but also in nations.

In chh. xiii—xxiii the prophet paints a series of such judicial acts on various surrounding peoples; each of whom embodied some special form of worldly pride or ungodly self-will. But conspicuous above all is *Asshur-Babel;* which after fourteen centuries of comparative quiet was now reviving the idea of universal empire: though Nimrod's ruined tower stood as a perpetual warning against any such attempt. It was the divine purpose to allow this world-empire to be consolidated; that He might use it for His own purposes, in the chastisement both of various Gentile races and, especially, of His own people, Israel. His was "the hand that was stretched out over all nations" (xiv. 26); to break up the fallow ground of the world's surface, and prepare it for the good seed of the kingdom of God.

But although the above chapters (xiii—xxiii) are thus bound together, and outwardly, too, are united by the title "Burden" (see on xiii. 1), yet we cannot detach chh. xiii and xiv from what has gone before without injury to the whole series. For

(1) It is only in these chapters that we have the full antithesis to the mighty overflowing of the Assyrian deluge in chh. vii, viii, x.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *God mustereth the armies of his wrath.* 6 *He threateneth to destroy Babylon by the Medes.* 19 *The desolation of Babylon.*

THE burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.
2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto

(2) The deliverance of Zion, so briefly alluded to in ch. xii, requires a further view of the enemy's prostration: which these chapters supply. Ch. xii, indeed, is but as an introit to xiii, xiv. It is in xiv. 4—27, rather than in xii, that we have a song of triumph analogous to that of Exod. xv.

(3) xiv. 27 (preceding the "burden" delivered in the year of Ahaz's death) seems to be the natural termination of the series which began with vii. 1.

(4) There are many verbal links that connect xiii and xiv with the foregoing chapters. (Note A.)

(5) The complete excision of Ephraim had been foretold in ch. vii. So mysterious an event,—reversing, as it seemed to do, the whole course of history, and lifting Nimrodic ambition to an elevation from which it looked down with contempt on the Covenant of Promise,—required a fuller revelation of the divine purpose concerning Asshur-Babylon, as its counterpoise. This is supplied in chh. xiii, xiv.

It follows that the several series of prophecies are not to be viewed as so many distinct tablets: but rather as dovetailing into each other.

NOTE A.

The following are some of the more important verbal links:—

אפי	: x. 25,—xiii. 3.
זעמי	: x. 5, —xiii. 5.
חבל	: x. 27,—xiii. 5.
מסס	: x. 18,—xiii. 7.
שפל	: x. 33,—xiii. 11.
בעברת י"י צ'	: ix. 18,—xiii. 13.
נגש	: ix. 3, —xiv. 4.
מטה שבט	: ix. 3, —xiv. 5.
מכה	: x. 20,—xiv. 6.
נדע	: x. 33,—xiv. 12.
שאר	: x. 19,—xiv. 22.
יד נטויה	: x. 4, —xiv. 27.
רעה רבץ	: xi. 7, —xiv. 30.

xiv. 25 is almost a reproduction of x. 27.

Obs. The last verse of ch. xii is quoted in Jer. li. 35; the second verse of ch. xiii in Jer. lii. 27.

CHAP. XIII. It may be inferred from xiv. 28 that this prophecy was written towards the end of Ahaz's reign. At that time spiritual darkness seemed to have won the conquest of the whole world. The "lamp of God" was now dark in His tabernacle. Hoshea, king of Israel, had become the vassal of Salmaneser, king of Assyria (2 K. xvii. 3). Ahaz had long before surrendered himself unreservedly to Tiglath-Pileser (2 K. xvi. 7).

Now, therefore, the light of prophecy shone forth with extraordinary power. Assyria was at this time (about B. C. 728—6) in the plenitude of her power. Isaiah prophesies, with the utmost distinctness (xiv. 24—27), that Asshur should be broken and trodden under foot in the Holy Land: and it is certain that Assyria never recovered the blow it sustained in the defeat of Sennacherib's army. But this was not all. He looked yet further into the future, and saw the doom of Babylon; the city which had never ceased to be the real centre of the empire (as Delhi still remained the centre of the Mogul empire, when the seat of government was at Agra). Babylon, which, for a millennium and a half, had been the metropolis of Western Asia, and was still replete with youthful energy, should fall utterly and irretrievably. He even mentions the name of the instruments, whom God would employ in commencing the work of demolition,—the Medes (*v.* 17); who were not, at this time, even an independent nation.

Nothing can be more definite than his statements as to the absolute ruin of the "Golden City." Such a prediction must have seemed at the time to violate all probability. Yet we have abundant evidence that it was fulfilled, both in regard of the nearer event of its capture by the Medes, and also of the ultimate desolation of its site. (See on *v.* 22 below.)

1. *The burden*] Hebr. *massa;* "aut *onus*, aut *pondus*," says Jerome. The words, "which Isaiah...*saw*," shew that the term is used in a derived sense (cp. Hab. i. 1). In Prov. xxx. 1, xxxi. 1 it is rendered "prophecy."

The original meaning of *massa* seems to be supplied by 2 K. ix. 25, where it is used of the divine sentence upon Ahab: "The Lord lifted up upon him this burden." The sentence issued against an individual or a community hung as a heavy weight, which at last dragged them down. Compare Zech. xii. 1—3; a passage quoted, through a strange oversight, by Gesenius and others, to prove that the word may be used of prophecies which are not of a *minatory* character. (See also Jer. xxiii. 33—40; Lam. ii. 14.)

The word will occur again in xiv. 28, xv. 1, xvii. 1, xix. 1, xxi. 1, 11, 13, xxii. 1, xxiii. 1 (as also in xxx. 6); Nahum i. 1; Zech. ix. 1; Mal. i. 1.

Obs. 1. The "vision" in ch. ii is united with this by *v.* 11; "I will bring low the

them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, *even* them that rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, † like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

† Heb. *the likeness of.*

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

6 ¶ Howl ye; for the day of the LORD *is* at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore shall all hands † be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

† Or, *fall down.*

8 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them;

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haughtiness of the terrible ones." *There* the decree was issued against paganized Judah, here against the mightiest of pagan powers. The "Judge of all the earth" would deal out impartial justice to both.

Obs. 2. Some of the language employed carries our thoughts far beyond the judgment on any single nation. (See *vv.* 10, 11, 13.) It is a world-wide visitation, which culminates in Babylon.

2. *Lift ye up a banner*] Or, **standard** (*s. w. a.* in v. 26, xi. 12). Cp. Jer. li. 27 (*s. w.*).

There can be no doubt who it is that issues the command; since in *v.* 3 the hosts that are summoned are called "My sanctified ones." It is the "Holy One," who is speaking.

upon the high mountain] Or, *the* **levelled** *mountain;*—a description well suited to the "mountain of the house" (x. 32) with its temple-area at the top. (Gesen. "*mons lævis* vel *planus* in summo jugo." LXX. ὄρος πεδινόν.) From that mountain whose "Lebanon" had been hewn down by Babel (cp. Jer. vii. 29, xiv. 6, where the noun of the same root is used), the summons shall at length go forth to assemble God's ministers of vengeance upon the proud city.

shake the hand] (*s. w. a.* x. 32); pointing to the devoted city, which they are called to assault.

the gates of the nobles] Or, "of princes;"—the gateways of the royal city, by which the princes of the earth entered.

3. *I have commanded...*] Or, *I* **Myself** *have* **given charge** *to My* **consecrated** *ones:* whom I have chosen and set apart for this work of retribution (*v.* 17). Cp. Jer. xxii. 7, li. 27, 28; Zeph. i. 7 (in all of which the "prepare" of A. V. is properly "consecrate").

my mighty ones] Cp. Joel iii. 11.

that rejoice in...] Or, *that* **exult** *in my excellency* (cp. Zeph. iii. 11);—joyfully working out all that is for the honour of my sovereignty. Vulg. "exultantes in gloriâ meâ."

This does not necessarily imply that they were *consciously* promoting God's glory (xlv. 4, 5). Yet it is remarkable that the Persians looked on the destruction of idols as part of their national vocation. A certain consciousness of superiority to other pagan races appears in the epithet ὑπερκόμπους, applied to them in Æsch. 'Pers.' 827, 831; and in the remark made by Herodotus that "they think themselves by far in all respects the noblest of mankind" (i. 134).

4. *The noise...*] As if it were, "(Hark!) the noise...!" (Cp. xl. 3, lii. 8.)

The nations are heard gathering on the high plateau of Iran; on the mountains of Armenia and Media in particular (Jer. li. 27).

multitude] Or, "uproar" (xvii. 12: where also the word rendered "tumultuous" occurs).

5. *a far country*] xlvi. 11 (of Cyrus).

weapons of...] Cp. x. 5.

to destroy (liv. 16, *s. w.*) *the whole land*] Or, "earth;" LXX. οἰκουμένην. So in *vv.* 9, 11; cp. xiv. 7, 9, 16, 21, xxiv. 17, xxvi. 21.

6. *the day of the* LORD, &c.] Quoted from Joel i. 15. Cp. on ch. ii. 12.

as a destruction] A sudden, desolating, stroke (*s. w. a.* in xxii. 4, li. 19). In the Hebrew, *Shod mish-Shadday;* with an *assonance*, which can no more be called "a play upon words," than our *rhyme* can be properly so termed.

Joel i. 15, Ezek. i. 24, x. 5, and the present verse, are the only places in the prophets where the name, *Shadday*, occurs.

7. *be faint*] Or, "slack;"—hanging down in nerveless despondency (xxxv. 3, *s. w.*).

shall melt] xix. 1; Josh. vii. 5. (Cp. x. 18.)

8. *shall be afraid*] Or, **dismayed** (xxi. 3, *s. w.*). See Dan. v. 6.

Several of the terms used in this verse occur in Ps. xlviii. 5, 6.

Obs. The key-note of Ps. xlviii, "Great is the Lord" (*v.* 1), is parallel to ch. xii. 6: and the expression "sides of the north" (*v.* 2) occurs in ch. xiv. 13.

they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall †be amazed †one at another; their faces *shall be as* †flames.

†Heb. wonder. †Heb. every man at his neighbour. †Heb. faces of the flames.

9 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be [a]darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

a Ezek. 32. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15. Matth. 24. 29. Mark 13. 24. Luke 21. 25.

11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

14 And it shall be as the chased

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shall be amazed] Or, **look aghast** (Gen. xliii. 33, *s. w.*).

their faces] Or, *their* **face is a face of flames**:—excitement flashing up amidst their terror, as when flames rise out of thick volumes of smoke. Cp. Joel ii. 6.

9. *cruel...*] Or, **a cruel one, even** *wrath.* The day is unrelentingly severe;—it is indeed wholly "wrath and burning anger." Cp. Jer. l. 42.

to lay...] Or, "to make the earth (*v.* 5) a desolation."

out of it] Ps. civ. 34.

10. The outpouring of these vials of wrath shall disturb the whole order of nature; darkening the stars and convulsing the earth. Cp. ix. 19, xxxiv. 4.

constellations] Hebr. *kesilim.* KESIL ("the Self-Confident") is the title given to the constellation Orion (see on Job ix. 9; Amos v. 8); which by the Persians is called *Nimrod,* and by the Arabs, *the Giant.*

shall not give] Or, **give forth.** Cp. Joel ii. 10.

the sun shall be] Or, **is** *darkened* **at his rising.** Cp. Joel ii. 31; Ezek. xxxii. 7.

11. *the world*] *s. w. a.* in xiv. 17, 21, xviii. 3, xxiv. 4, xxvi. 9, 18, xxvii. 6, xxxiv. 1.

cause...to cease] Ps. viii. 2, xlvi. 9. Cp. ch. xiv. 5.

lay low] xxv. 11, 12, xxvi. 5; Dan. v. 19 (*s. w.*).

of the terrible] Or, "terrible ones" (xxv. 3, 4, 5, xxix. 5).

12. *I will make a man* (frail and feeble as he is, Hebr. *enosh*)...**yea,** *a man*] (formed out of dust, Hebr. *adam*). The same two words are used by the writer of Ps. viii. 4, when he is setting forth the lowly estate of our human race;—so cared for by God, and even employed by Him to "*cause* the enemy and the avenger *to cease*" (*v.* 2).

While the "haughty and terrible" ones are "laid low," the fire of divine judgment shall work only for the ennobling and purification of the feeble and oppressed. Them He would hold "precious" (Ps. lxxii. 14). They should survive, and come forth more precious than "gold" (Job xxiii. 10. Cp. ch. xlviii. 10).

Obs. 1. Was not that "fear of the Lord," which so many in Israel learnt by means of the captivity, the very wisdom that "cannot be valued with *the gold-wedge of Ophir* (*s. w.*)," whose "exchange is not for a jewel of *fine gold* (*s. w.*)"?

Obs. 2. Of far greater value than all the "gold of Ophir" (1 Chro. xxix. 4; 2 Chro. iii. 6), and "fine gold" (2 Chro. iii. 5, 8), with which Solomon overlaid the sanctuary, was a sanctified human soul (Ps. xlix. 8). To redeem souls that might be so sanctified, was the purpose of the Incarnation (1 Pet. i. 18—22). In preparation for that event Israel was now to be scattered across the world in humiliation, the nations to be "visited" (*v.* 11), Babel to be overthrown, and a "remnant" restored. (Cp. ch. xliii. 4.)

13. *Therefore*] This spiritual purification (cp. Dan. xii. 10) was the final cause of so great a mundane convulsion.

I will shake (xiv. 16, xxiii. 11, *s. w.*) *the heavens*] Cp. Hag. ii. 6 (Heb. xii. 26, 27).—Allusion seems here made to some supra-terrestrial empire which needs to be "shaken," in order that the Kingdom of God may be established. (Cp. on xxiv. 21.)

the earth shall remove] Rather, **tremble,** Ps. xviii. 7, H. 8. (Cp. Job ix. 6.)

at *the wrath of*] *s. w. a.* in ix. 19, H. 18.

14. *And it shall be as the...*] Or, *it shall be as* **with a** *chased roe, and as* **with a flock that hath none to gather it.**—This is to be the consequence of that earth-trembling. They who had been brought together by force into that unblest unity of Babel, shall make

roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.

15 Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined *unto them* shall fall by the sword.

16 Their children also shall be [b] dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.

17 Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and *as for* gold, they shall not delight in it.

18 *Their* bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

19 ¶ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be [†] as when God overthrew [c] Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

21 But [†] wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of [†] doleful creatures; and [‖] [†] owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

[b] Psal. 137. 9.

[†] Heb. *as the overthrowing.*

[c] Gen. 19. 24. Jer. 50. 40.

[†] Heb. *Ziim.*

[†] Heb. *Ochim.*

[‖] [†] Or, *ostriches.*

[†] Heb. *daughters of the owl.*

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haste to "deliver themselves, as a roe from the hand of the hunter" (Prov. vi. 5). Cp. lii. 11; Jer. l. 8, 28, li. 45.

to his own people]—now no longer denationalized; *into his own land*, from which the oppressor's yoke is broken. Cp. Jer. l. 16, li. 9.

Obs. Babel from the outset (Gen. xi. 4—9) had set herself to oppose the divine provision, which separated "the families of men *in their nations*" (Gen. x. 32).

15. *Every one that is found*] Or, "present (in her);" of her citizens. (Cp. xxii. 3.)

joined unto them] Or, "*joined* thereunto"—foreigners, who had attached themselves to the city and were resolved to abide in her. They must share in her ruin.

16. *Their children*] Rather, *Their* **infants**:—the word used in Ps. cxxxvii. 9. Cp. Nahum iii. 10 (*s. w.*).

their wives] Zech. xiv. 2.

17. *I will stir up*] Or, "raise up" (so A.V. after Zech. ix. 13), as out of slumber (Song of Sol. ii, 7; cp. ch. xiv. 9);—that they may be used as His scourge (ch. x. 26). Cp. Ps. lxxx. 2; Jer. li. 11; ch. xli. 2.

the Medes] Hebr. MADAY (Gen. x. 2);—in ch. xxi. 2 joined with *Elam* (Persia). That the Medes were the leading nation, is testified by the name "Mede" commonly given to the Persian king in the Greek historians (as also by the words μηδίζειν, μηδισμός).

Obs. The "awakening" of the Median nation (B.C. 709) took place about twelve years after Salmaneser had carried away Israel (B.C. 721), and "put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and *in the cities of the Medes*" (2 K. xviii. 11). It seems not improbable, then, that the deportation of Israel may have been the means used by God for preparing and *consecrating* (*v.* 3) the people which was mainly instrumental in overthrowing both Nineveh and Babylon. (Cp. Introd. p. 7.)

shall not regard silver] Xenophon ('Cyr.' v. 3) makes Cyrus speak to the Medes of their not having joined him from a desire of money.

18. *bows*] for which the Persians were famed. Cp. xxii. 3, 6.

19. *the glory*] Or, "the beauty" (xxviii. 1);—which stood as an ornament, or decoration, to all the kingdoms of the world:—"the 'glory' of the Chaldees;" to the grandeur of which they pointed in self-admiring triumph.

as when...] Cp. on i. 7. (Jer. l. 40.)

20. *It shall never be...*] Or, "It shall not abide (Joel iii. 20; Ps. cxxv. 1: cp. Jer. xvii. 25) for ever, neither continue (Ps. cii. 28; cp. Jer. xxxiii. 16) from age to age."

pitch tent there] Travellers remark, that the Bedwin Arabs still have a superstitious dread of lodging on the site of Babylon.

21. Most of these tenants of the desolate city bear names that are significant of their character.

wild beasts of the desert] Hebr. *tsiyyim:* xxiii. 13, xxxiv. 14; Jer. l. 39 (in Ps. lxxii. 9 used of human beings); lit. "droughty ones."

doleful creatures] Hebr. *ochim* (here only)—"groaners."

owls] Or (as in marg.), **ostriches**—lit. "daughters of screaming" (xxxiv. 13, xliii. 20).

satyrs] (xxxiv. 14):—"hairy (or, shaggy) ones." Vulg. *pilosi.* Commonly applied to the goat (Lev. iv. 24): but here referred by

[Heb. *lim.* [Or, *palaces.*

22 And [†] the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their [‖] desolate houses, and dragons in *their* pleasant palaces: and her time *is* near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *God's merciful restoration of Israel.* 4 *Their triumphant insultation over Babel.* 24 *God's purpose against Assyria.* 29 *Palestina is threatened.*

some, with much probability, to the baboon. "The Moko, or Macacus Arabicus, is at present found in Babylonia" (Dr Tristram, 'B. N. H.'). One of Jerome's explanations is: "*silvestres quosdam homines*, quos nonnulli fatuos ficarios vocant."

22. *wild beasts of the islands*] H. *iyyim* (xxxiv. 14; Jer. l. 39), "wailers;" an epithet applied in Arabic to the jackal.

in their desolate houses] Lit. "among his widows;"—the Hebrew word bearing a close resemblance to the word rendered *palaces* in xxii. 13, xxxii. 14, xxxiv. 13:—"his widowed mansions."

and dragons] Rather, **jackals** (so Pococke on Micah i. 8, after R. Tanchum):—xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 7, xliii. 20; Jer. li. 37, &c.

in their pleasant palaces] Or, *in* **the** *palaces* **of pleasure**:—which had been as so many temples of luxury.

her time] The "time of her visitation" (Jer. xlvi. 21, l. 27, 31: cp. xxvii. 7).

be prolonged] by any further reprieve: Ezek. xii. 25, 28 (*s. w.*).

On the Fulfilment of the Prophecy.

Two points are here to be attended to: 1, The capture of Babylon by Cyrus; 2, Its eventual desolation.

I. That the prophecy refers to *the capture of Babylon under Cyrus*, is definitely established by the admissions of unbelievers. It is because this reference is quite undeniable, that those who are fettered by naturalistic prejudice have tried to dislocate chh. xiii and xiv from the series to which they belong.

Undoubtedly, such a prediction could not have been made except by the help of a special act of divine illumination.

II. As to *the eventual desolation of Babylon.*—It is agreed on all hands that the city has long been utterly ruined. "The site of Babylon," says Mr Layard, is "a naked and hideous waste." "Owls," he says, "start from the scanty thickets, and the foul jackal stalks through the furrows" ('Nin. and Bab.' p. 484).

Now it is to be noted:—

(1) That even after the capture of the city by Cyrus, *there was nothing to suggest anticipations of such a consummation as this.* "Even in the time of Herodotus, there was everything, to human appearance, that was calculated to secure for Babylon a continued prosperity and greatness. The city was still the most populous and magnificent of the world, and might be said to have changed its masters rather than its condition; for the Persian monarchs were wont to spend several months of the year in it. And the region in which it was situated, the province of Babylonia, was so exceedingly rich and fertile, that it supported the king of Persia, his army, and his whole establishment, for four months; in other words, it contributed *one-third* of the entire revenue of his kingdom." (Dr Fairbairn, 'On Proph.' p. 212.)

(2) That CYRUS began the work of enfeebling Babylon by building up Susa and Ecbatana: and that the work thus unintentionally commenced by him, went on by slow, but sure, steps during the following four centuries.

Darius dismantled its walls: and Xerxes destroyed the tower of Belus.

In the time of Alexander, it had fallen into decay: but he saw its natural advantages, and purposed making it the capital of his empire,—that empire being in his intention nothing short of the world. His plans were cut short by a fatal fever, caught among the marshes of the lower Euphrates; whose canals he had begun to repair.

Seleucus Nicator (B.C. 312) inflicted two fatal blows on Babylon; first, by building Seleucia on the Tigris, which drew away a large part of its population; and secondly, by transferring the seat of government from Babylon to Antioch.

About B.C. 20 the site of Babylon was described by Strabo (XVI. 15) as "a vast desolation" (quoting the verse, ἐρημία μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ μεγάλη πόλις).

The vision had "its appointed time;" but "at the end it spake, and did not lie; it came, and tarried not" (Hab. ii. 3).

(3) That what has been urged against the exactness of the fulfilment of this prophecy—namely, the existence of a town called Hillah, with villages and gardens, "on or near the site" of Babylon—detracts in no sensible degree from the weight of the above facts. It is scarcely justifiable, however, to say that Hillah is *on the site* of Babylon. For, after so much exploration, the boundaries of the city are still undiscovered. "*No vestige*" of its mighty walls has yet been found (G. Rawlinson, 'A. Mon.,' III. 338, 9).

CHAP. XIV. This judgment on Babel was to prepare the way for Israel's becoming

FOR the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

2 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, † whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

† Heb. *that had taken them captives.*

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

4 ¶ That thou shalt take up this ‖ proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the ‖ golden city ceased!

‖ Or, *taunting speech.*

‖ Or, *exactress of gold.*

5 The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, *and* the sceptre of the rulers.

6 He who smote the people in wrath with † a continual stroke, he

† Heb. *a stroke without removing.*

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the centre of the future kingdom of God upon earth.

"Here," remarks Delitzsch, "in *vv.* 1, 2, we have chh. xl—lxvi *in nuce*."

1. *will have mercy*] Or, **compassion**; xxx. 18, xlix. 10, 13, liv. 8, 10, lx. 10.

and will yet choose] Or, **yet again** (Zech. ii. 12, *s. w.*) *choose*,—by a second act of electing grace; "choosing" again him who once had been "rejected" (ii. 6) as reprobate silver, but had now been purified "in the furnace of affliction" (xlviii. 10). Cp. xli. 8, 9, xliv. 1, 2, xlix. 7; Zech. i. 17, ii. 12, H. 16, iii. 2.

shall be joined with] Or, *shall* **join himself unto** *them*: lvi. 3; Num. xviii. 2.

2. *the people*] **The peoples.** Cp. lxvi. 20.

shall possess them] *s. w. a.* Lev. xxv. 46. Cp. xlv. 14.

in the land...] Or, **upon** *the* LORD*'s land* (Lev. xxv. 23); Immanuel's land (viii. 8). The land had been made over by the kings of Israel and Judah to the oppressor;—it was now redeemed.

take them captives...] Or, **lead captive their captors**;—raising them thereby to a higher dignity. The possibility of such a beneficent triumph of the vanquished over their conquerors is made familiar to us by the well-known, "*Græcia capta* ferum victorem *cepit*." But now captive Israel effects a nobler conquest;—enfranchising the nations,—drawing them to the obedience of Him, *cui servire regnare est*,—and persuading them to love the servitude of righteousness issuing in holiness (Rom. vi. 19; cp. 2 Cor. x. 5).

3. *give thee rest*] Cp. Deut. xxv. 19; 2 S. vii. 11.

thy fear] Or, **disquiet**, Job iii. 17, 26, xiv. 1 (*s. w.*). Cp. 2 S. vii. 10.

the hard (or, *cruel*, xix. 4) *bondage*] *s. w. a.* Exod. i. 14.

4. *this proverb*] Or, **parable** (Hab. ii. 6);—containing in figurative language a representation of truth, which is capable of a lower and a higher application.

Obs. 1. It must never be forgotten that the retribution denounced against Babylon would light on all who sinned as she did;—would light on Israel itself, if Israel rebelled against its God (iii. 8). Already the prophet had beheld "their glory and their multitude and their pomp" descending into the jaws of Hades (v. 14).

Obs. 2. The punishment of Babel was symbolic of the final doom of him, who claimed to be proprietor of "all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them" (Luke iv. 5, 6). Cp. on *v.* 12.

How hath...] Into what absolute quiet has she now sunk! How *complete* is the overthrow! (Lam. i. 1: cp. on ch. i. 21.)

the oppressor] He who imposed that severe *bondage* (ix. 4; Job iii. 18).

ceased] from that endless turmoil of ambition and pleasure. Cp. xxiv. 8 (*s. w.*).

the golden city] Hebr. *madhevah*, "dealer in gold;" or (as marg.), "gold-exactress;" from the Chaldee *dahav*, which occurs with such marked emphasis in Dan. ii. 32, 38, iii. 1, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 18, v. 2, 3, 4, 7, 17, 23, 29. Nebuchadnezzar's golden image was his empire personified. (Cp. Jer. li. 7; Rev. xvii. 4, xviii. 12.)

Obs. Under Solomon Jerusalem became a minor "golden city:"—tainted with the Babylonish admiration of gold, 1 K. x. 14, 15. (Cp. ch. ii. 7.)

5. *the staff*] The imperial power of Babylon is here the staff.

of the rulers] Or, **of rulers**; of men, who claimed to have absolute dominion in their own right. (Cp. xlix. 7, *s. w.*)

6. *He who...*] Or, **which** *smote the* **peoples**... (x. 20).

with a continual stroke] that never intermitted;—undeviating, unalterable, inevitable.

he that...] Rather, **which subdued** *the*

that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, *and* none hindereth.

7 The whole earth is at rest, *and* is quiet: they break forth into singing.

8 Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, *saying*, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

9 ‖Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet *thee* at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the †‖chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?

11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, ‖O Lucifer, son of the morning!

‖ Or, *The grave.*
† Heb. *leaders.*
‖ Or, *great goats.*
‖ Or, *O day star.*

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nations in anger, **with a pursuit that held not back**;—yielding to no restraint of pity, or of conscience.

7. *they break forth into singing*] Or, "into a joyful shout." The phrase is peculiar to Isaiah (xliv. 23, xlix. 13, liv. 1, lv. 12). The verb occurs also in lii. 9, and Ps. xcviii. 4. (See above, Vol. IV., p. 507.)

8. *Yea, the fir trees*] So the Vulg. always (*abies*). The LXX. generally gives it "cypress." Dr Tristram takes it to be "one of the most characteristic trees of Lower Lebanon, the Aleppo pine, which is inferior only to the cedar." It is mentioned along with the cedar in xxxvii. 24, lx. 13; Zech. xi. 2.

These noblest of trees would seem to represent kings and princes,—standing high above the "peoples" mentioned in *v.* 6. (Cp. ii. 13, x. 33, 34; Judg. ix. 15; 2 K. xiv. 9; Dan. iv. 14.)

art laid down] in the sleep of death (xliii. 17; Job iii. 13).

is come up] Or, **cometh up**.

9. *Hell from beneath*] Or, "Hades **beneath**."

is moved for thee] Or, "is disquieted for thee;"—in a commotion of expectancy; not knowing how to receive so eminent a guest.

it stirreth up (xiii. 17, *s. w.*) *the dead*] Hebr. *rephaim*:—rendered in xxvi. 14, "deceased:" in Deut. ii. 11, iii. 11, &c. "the giants" (as the Vulg. always gives it). "The long dead," may give the sense sufficiently.

the chief ones] Or (as marg.), **leaders**: lit. he-goats (or, bell-wethers); xxxiv. 6; Zech. x. 3.

Obs. Hades is their shepherd, Ps. xlix. 14.

from their thrones] The parable speaks of the disembodied souls, as if they retained, in that region of shadows, not only a form, but a position also, analogous to what they had on earth.

10. *shall speak*] Lit. *shall* **answer**. Before his arrival, they stood in dread; not knowing how they would be able to address one so mighty. His appearance among them announces how mistaken they were. They *reply* to the announcement in the wondering exclamation; **Thou also art made** *weak as we!* Gesen. compares the εἴδωλα καμόντων of Homer ('Il.' XXIII. 72).

11. *Thy pomp*] Or, "Thy pride" (xiii. 19, *s. w.*).

is brought down to the grave] "To Hades" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 9).

of thy viols] Cp. v. 12 (*s. w.*).

the worm...] More nearly, **beneath thee is spread the maggot** (like the cushion of thy couch), *and* **thy coverlet** *is the worm;* the worm,—no longer the "vermilion" (Lam. iv. 5, *s. w.*) derived from it.

12. *O Lucifer*] Or, "radiant one;" from the verb used in xiii. 10, "*give forth* (or, radiate) their light:"—a name of the morning-star; which shines as a monarch in the starry heavens.

son of the morning] Or, "of the morning-dawn."

Babylon had shone forth in the dawn of the world's history with surprising lustre; but was "perverted" (xlvii. 10) by self-admiration;—and so reproduced on earth the sin which had caused the ruin of an archangel.

Obs. 1. Not less had Solomon, the "morning-star" of Israel's night-heavens, fallen through self-confidence; attributing to himself the rays which he only reflected from the yet unrisen Sun of Righteousness.

Obs. 2. But a brighter morning-dawn was promised to those, who waited on the Lord (cp. viii. 20);—a brighter "morning-star;" even He, "the dew of whose youth is from the womb of the morning-dawn" (Ps. cx. 3);—He who is described as not only "the root and offspring of David" (cp. on xi. 1), but "the bright morning-star" (Rev. xxii. 16).

Obs. 3. As Babylon did not at once disappear, after it was hurled from its imperial throne, but suffered a gradual decay; so with the invisible empire of darkness. Our Lord said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke x. 18),—utterly discomfited;

how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, *Is* this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

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but his empire is not yet annihilated: though "his time is near to come" (xiii. 22).

cut down] Or, **hewn down** (*s. w. a.* in x. 33). The word is frequently used of the demolition of the *asherahs*, or idols erected to Ashtoreth (Venus, or, the morning-star), Deut. vii. 5; 2 Chro. xxxi. 1. These idols seem in some cases to have had horns, representing, probably, rays of light.

which didst weaken] Or, **disable**. The expression is a singularly forcible one;—"which didst hurl defeat upon the nations;" or, "supreme over the routed nations." Gesenius (in 'Thes.') "regnans in gentes prostratas."—The Assyro-Babylonian empire aimed at securing its sway over the nations by *destroying national life*.

Grim tyrant! ruling over realms strewn with carnage!

13. *For thou hast said*] Lit. "And thou!—thou saidst" (cp. *v.* 19).

I will ascend into...] Or, "I will climb the heaven;"—building me a "heaven-reaching tower" (Gen. xi. 4), on which to erect my throne of world-wide empire: thence to defy the will of Him, who has "set the bounds of the peoples" (Deut. xxxii. 8; Acts xvii. 26).

above the stars of God] The Babylonians thought the several constellations to be connected with particular nations, over whose destiny they dominated.

He, the "morning-star," would fain dominate over all.

Obs. 1. In Job xxxviii. 7, the "stars of the morning" are in parallelism with "the sons of God," the angels. That there is a real correlation between *these* "stars of God" and our world, we know from Dan. x. 13.

Obs. 2. In the kingdom of Christ, the "angels of the churches" are designated "stars" (Rev. i. 20).

the mount of the congregation] Or, "of congregation;"—where the sons of God assembled. It is the word used in the phrase "Tent of *congregation*," or "of *meeting*."

A reference to Zion is implied in what follows; *in the sides* (or, recesses) *of the north:* see Ps. xlviii. 3. There was the earthly palace of "the Great King" (Ps. xlvii. 2, 6, 7); in which He gave audience to His subjects; and from which He issued His righteous decrees to the nations (Ps. xlvi. 6, xlviii. 10).

When Babylon had triumphed over Zion, there appeared to be no hindrance to her reigning supreme over all nations.

Obs. Mr Birks remarks, that "the starry region around the North Pole, high above the earth, *always visible and luminous*, is a natural type of the heaven of glory, the special abode of the Most High."

A lowlier, yet dearer, type was provided for those who visited "the waters of Shiloah." When they lifted up their eyes northward, they beheld "the city of the Great King," God's "holy mountain" (Ps. xlviii. 1, 2).

14. *I will ascend...*] Or, "I will climb above the high-places (lviii. 14) of the clouds;"—the eminences, which overlooked the general surface of the clouds, as the "high-places of the earth" (Deut. xxxii. 13) do the level plain.

like the most High] Cp. Ezek. xxviii. 2. The Assyrians gave the name of "God" to their monarchs; as the Persians and Romans afterwards did to theirs. In the wall-sculptures of the Assyrian palaces, the king has the symbols of deity assigned to him.

Obs. 1. In xl. 18, we have the challenge; "Unto whom then will ye liken (*s. w.*) God; or what likeness (*s. w.*) will ye equal to Him?"

Obs. 2. The same Hebrew word (*Elyon*) is used in Ps. lxxxix. 27 of the "*First-born*,—*most High* above the kings of the earth." He was truly so.

15. *to hell*] "To Hades." Cp. Matt. xi. 23.

to the sides] Or, "to the recesses" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 13).

16. Here the scene of the parable is changed back to earth. The corpse of the mighty conqueror is lying yonder unburied.

and consider thee] Or, "they shall gaze intently at thee;"—like men, who are trying to make out the nature of some strange sight.

that made the earth to...] Or (*s. w. a.* in xiii. 13), *that* **shook** *the earth, that* **made** *kingdoms to* **tremble**.

17 *That* made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* ‖ opened not the house of his prisoners?

‖ Or, *did not let his prisoners loose homeward?*

18 All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, *and as* the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: [a] the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

[a] Job 18. 19. Psal. 21. 10. & 37. 28. & 109. 13.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children [b] for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

[b] Exod. 20. 5. Matth. 23. 35.

22 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

23 I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of

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17. *That made*] Or, "He made."

that opened not...] Rather (as marg.), *his prisoners he* **loosed** (Jer. xl. 4) *not* **to their homes.**

18. *lie*] Or, **have laid them down** (cp. *v. 8, s. w.*).

in his own house] An honoured sepulchral home (xxii. 16; Eccl. xii. 5).

19. *But thou...*] Or, **And thou!**—*thou art cast out* (Amos viii. 3; Jer. xxii. 19) **away from** *thy* **sepulchre**;—the tomb, which he had built for himself in his lifetime (cp. xxii. 16).

abominable branch] Shoot, or scion (xi. 1, lx. 21), **that is abhorred**:—hurled away (cp. on vi. 13) as offensive and impure;—*cast forth* to be burned (John xv. 6).

as the raiment...] the blood-stained raiment of those who are slain in battle. The LXX. has (in *v.* 20), "As a garment stained with blood is unclean, so shalt thou be unclean." (Cp. Lam. iv. 14.) So Kimchi.

The offensive, blood-stained, garments taken off the bodies of those who had fallen in battle were *cast forth* to be burned (ix. 5). He, the conqueror, who had waded over fields of human blood, was now a mere mass of gore;—and was cast away into the heap, on the field of battle, where the gory garments were awaiting the flames.

His victims were, at least, interred among *the stones of the pit*, in the grave dug out for the slain:—but *he* was flung away, *as a carcase trodden* **underfoot**, which is *cast forth*,—for the birds or dogs to devour (1 S. xvii. 44, 46; 2 K. ix. 33, 37).

20. *hast destroyed*] *s. w. a.* Gen. xiii. 10, xix. 13 (cp. ch. xiii. 19).

and slain] His subjects, killed in battle by the enemy's sword, were slain *by him*; the victims of his ambition (cp. 2 S. xii. 9).

the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned] Or, "shall not be named for ever" (Ps. xxxvii. 9). This is denounced against the *dynasty*. Many commentators apply it to Belshazzar in particular.

Obs. The expression "seed of evil-doers" occurs elsewhere only in i. 4. The doom of Babel would apply to Israel, *in so far as Israel had affiliated itself to Babel.*

21. *Prepare slaughter*] Or, "a slaughter-house." Cp. Jer. li. 40.

for the iniquity of their fathers] which has gone on accumulating from age to age, and is now "filled up" (cp. Gen. xv. 16) by the unrepentant children (cp. Lev. xxvi. 40).

that they do not...] Rather, **they shall not arise** (*s. w. a.* xxvi. 14);—out of their state of death. There is no national resurrection for them. Those mighty *city-builders* of Babel and Asshur (Gen. x. 10—12), who seemed to claim the world as their heritage, are extinct.

with cities] Vulg. "civitatum." Similarly Aq., S., Th.; Saadias, Kimchi; Drechsl., Del. The Targ. "enemies" (and so, but quite needlessly, many moderns). The LXX. is doubtful.

Obs. For purified Israel there was reserved a bright resurrection-morning when they should "blossom and bud, and *fill the face of the world* (*s. w.*) with fruit" (xxvii. 6).

22. *I will rise up*] xxxiii. 10; Amos vii. 9.

son, and nephew (*i.e.* grandchild)] Rather, **issue and offspring** (Gen. xxi. 23).

23. *the bittern*] Joined in xxxiv. 12 and in Zeph. ii. 14 with the "pelican:"—which somewhat favours the rendering adopted by A.V. from David Kimchi. The rendering of the LXX. and Vulg., "hedge-hog" (or, porcupine), is supported by Bochart, Gesen., and others.

pools of water] When the canals of the Euphrates fell into disrepair, they turned the whole neighbourhood of Babylon into marshland (Diod. II. 7).

water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

24 ¶ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, *so* shall it stand:

25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

26 This *is* the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this *is* the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

27 For the LORD of hosts hath [c]purposed, and who shall disannul *it*? and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

28 In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.

29 ¶ Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a [f]cockatrice, and his fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent.

[c] 2 Chron. 20. 6. Job 9. 12. Prov. 21. 30. Dan. 4. 32.

[f] Or, *adder.*

I will sweep it] Or, "sweep it **away**,"—ridding the earth of that vast city; so imposing outwardly, yet inwardly a mass of corruption. (Cp. 1 K. xiv. 10; 2 K. xxi. 13.)

24. *so shall it*] Hebr. *so* **hath it** *come to pass.*—The divine thought is seen by divine prescience as already realized.

as I have purposed] Or, "planned" (xix. 12, 17, xxiii. 8, 9); embodying it in the great providential scheme (xlvi. 10; Ps. xxxiii. 11; Jer. l. 45).

so shall it] Rather, **that shall** *stand* (xlvi. 10; Prov. xix. 21; cp. vii. 7, viii. 10).

25. The prophet returns from the larger cycle of events, which stretches out into remote futurity (cp. on viii. 1—4), to predict a nearer event, which may stand as a guarantee of the ultimate fulfilment of the whole message. Cp. Jer. l. 18, 19.

in my land] Cp. viii. 8, "Thy land, O Immanuel."

my mountains] xlix. 11, lxv. 9; cp. xxix. 5—8, xxxi. 4, 5.

yoke...burden] As in ix. 4, x. 27.

The blow inflicted upon Sennacherib (from which Assyria never rallied, Intr. to chap. xiii) was the symbol of a greater overthrow, spoken of in xxv. 7, 8, "*In this mountain* He shall destroy the face of the covering cast over all the peoples."

26. *upon*] Or, "concerning." These events of Assyrian and Babylonian history would have a bearing on the whole course of the world's history.

27. *his hand is*] Lit. "His is the outstretched hand."

who shall turn it back?] (xliii. 13)—back from its intended work. The sorceries of Babylon would no more be able to "reverse" His counsel, than those of Balaam in the olden time had been (Num. xxiii. 20, *s. w.*).

28—32. Verse 28 is the introduction to the "burden" which *follows*.

The series of "burdens" from xiv. 28 to xxiii. 18 may be viewed as an unrolling of the "purpose concerning the whole earth" just mentioned (in *v.* 26).

That purpose included a "visitation" of all nations (xxiv. 21, xxvi. 21):—Asshur-Babel being an instrument employed by God in effecting it.

The prophet, standing on his watch-tower in Zion, turns his eye round to different points of the horizon; and surveys the relation in which each people stands to the advancing judgment. Yet his addresses to the nations must be thought of as chiefly meant for the warning and the comfort of *Israel;*—of Israel, which had too often adopted the sins of those whom she was meant to sanctify.

Obs. The series xiv. 28—xxiii falls into two halves. In the former half the peoples addressed are those of Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, and Egypt. Of the five "burdens" contained in the second half, three have enigmatical titles, "Desert of the Sea," "Dumah," "Valley of Vision;" while only two are inscribed with historical names.

28. *In the year...*] In the year which was reckoned as the last of his reign, B.C. 727:—the month Nisan of B.C. 726 being the commencement of the "first year" of Hezekiah's reign (2 Chro. xxix. 3).

In 2 Chro. xxviii. 18—21 we are told that in the reign of Ahaz the Philistines invaded the Shefelah and the Negeb, and occupied various towns and villages belonging to Judah; and that Ahaz appealed to Tiglath-Pileser for help against them. When it is considered that Sargon shortly afterwards besieged Ashdod, and that Sennacherib spent a considerable time in besieging Lachish and Libnah, we may be pretty certain that Tiglath would avail himself of such an opportunity as Ahaz gave him of opening the road to Egypt.

Now as Salmaneser invaded Samaria in the 4th year of Hezekiah (B. C. 723), and as Sargon's Egyptian campaign lasted three years, it would seem certain that Tiglath-Pileser died in or before B. C. 727. When Ahaz's

atrice, and his fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent.

30 And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie

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death followed upon this, and peace-loving Hezekiah, no way inclined to friendship with Asshur, ascended the throne, it might have seemed as if Philistia would have none to restrain her. Ahaz had long ago cast away the true Davidic Sceptre,—God's gracious Promise; and the Assyrian king whose sceptre he had relied on was no more. (Cp. Note A.)

I. The outer sense of the "burden," then, may be represented thus:—

The "inhabitress of Zion" (xii. 6) might rejoice in the knowledge of God's purposes concerning Asshur-Babel; but Philistia must not do so. For her, in spite of present appearances, only an increase of sorrow was in reserve. It was true that Hezekiah was not likely to invoke the help of the king of Assyria against them; yet Sargon's sting should prove worse than Tiglath's; and Sennacherib's more venomous than either of them. Meanwhile Judah, afflicted and humiliated as she was (2 Chro. xxix. 8), need not fear. She was safe beneath the protection of the Righteous One (cp. xi. 4). The "viper" and "flying fiery one" should not hurt her. When the "smoke" of the fierce conflagration streamed in from the north towards Philistia, Hezekiah might calmly answer "the messengers of the nation" (whether Israel, Assyria, or Philistia), that Zion was "founded" upon the holy hills and was a safe refuge.

Obs. In 2 K. xviii. 8 we are told that Hezekiah smote the whole of Philistia. It appears certain, however, that this must have been in the latter half of his reign. In the earlier half Hezekiah had no means (cp. ch. xxxvi. 8) of capturing towns, which could resist so long the whole force of Tartan and of Sennacherib. That he afterwards reduced them, may be fairly taken to prove how heavy were the losses inflicted on them by Sennacherib.

II. But underneath this first application there lay another that cut far deeper. The Philistines had the contemptuous name "uncircumcised" used of them even by men like Samson (Judg. xv. 18) and Saul (1 S. xxxi. 4). But Israel, from the beginning, had been called "uncircumcised in heart" (Lev. xxvi. 41: cp. Deut. xxx. 6). Were they, then, to be allowed to escape Philistia's punishment, though equally guilty?

For the present, indeed, Judah had set a reformation on foot. At the very beginning of his first year Hezekiah cleansed the temple and celebrated a passover. There was a sudden revulsion of feeling among the people. They rejoiced (2 Chro. xxix. 36, xxx. 23, 25) as men set free from bondage. The yoke of misery laid on them by Ahaz was broken. The yoke of idolatry too (even the subtle idolatry of the Brazen Serpent) was broken (2 K. xviii. 4; 2 Chro. xxxi. 1). They were "healed" (2 Chro. xxx. 20) of the serpent-bites.

Yet the "root of bitterness" (Deut. xxix. 18) was not extirpated:—and so neither was the "root" of the avenging serpent. That "root" would bring forth ministers of divine justice, who should inflict fatal wounds—not on the true Zion, which was immortal, but—on carnal Israel.—This application of Isaiah's "burden" is almost explicitly given by Jeremiah: "*Circumcise yourselves to the Lord*, and take away the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest My fury come forth *like fire*, and burn that none can quench it....For I will bring evil *out of the north*, and a great destruction" (iv. 4—6: cp. vi. 10, ix. 26). "The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan [in the north]. ...Behold *I will send serpents, cockatrices*, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord" (viii. 16, 17).

Yet, when that extremity of suffering should fall on Judah, the "poor" and "needy" would still be fed in quiet pastures. Zion's sure foundation still remained.

29. *Rejoice not thou...*] Lit. *Rejoice not,* **Philistia, all of thee;**—give not thyself so wholly to rejoicing;—for, ere long (*v.* 31), *dissolved,* **Philistia, is all of thee.**

the rod of him that...] Or, *the rod* **which** *smote thee* (as at *vv.* 5, 6: see Note A).

out of the serpent's root shall come forth] It is scarcely possible not to see here an antithesis to xi. 1, 10. Out of the root of Jesse should come forth One, who should defend the poor; and make the viper innocuous; and set up a standard, beneath which should be rest. (Cp. Note B.) But that consummation is not yet. First of all, the rebellious must undergo chastisement; and to work that chastisement the world-empire is allowed to continue,—Assyria, Babylon, and Rome being, in turn, employed to slay the "uncircumcised."

Obs. The "rod of God's indignation" becomes, when it is necessary, a serpent,—as did Aaron's rod, Exod. vii. 10—12.

a cockatrice] Or, "viper" (nearly *s. w. a.* in xi. 8).

a fiery flying serpent] Lit. "a flying fiery one:" elsewhere only in xxx. 6 (which begins, "*The burden,* &c.").—On the word rendered "fiery one" (*saraf*), see vi. 2.

30. *the firstborn* (sons) *of the poor*]—God's own possession (Num. iii. 13), lowly as they were. (Cp. Heb. xii. 23.)

feed...lie down] *s. w. a.* v. 17, xi. 7.

down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, *art* dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and ‖ none *shall be* alone in his ‖ appointed times.

‖ Or, he shall *not* be *alone.*

‖ Or, *assemblies.*

32 What shall *one* then answer the messengers of the nation? That [d] the LORD hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall ‖ trust in it.

[d] Psal. 87. 1, 5. & 102. 16.

‖ Or, *betake themselves unto it.*

I will kill] *s. w. a.* xi. 4, lxv. 15.

thy root] v. 24. Cp. Amos ii. 9.

and he shall slay] Or, "and thy remnant **shall they** slay."

31. *Howl*] Or, "Wail;" *s. w. a.* xiii. 6, xv. 2, 3, xvi. 7, xxiii. 1, 6, 14.

O gate] of Philistia's fortress-towns;—or, of Judah's temple-fortress. Cp. xxiv. 12.

dissolved] The word used of the panic-stricken host of the Philistines, in 1 S. xiv. 16. Cp. Exod. xv. 15; Ps. lxxv. 3.

there shall come...] Lit. "out of the north **cometh** a smoke,"—as of a marching column of flame. It is the Assyrian, or the Babylonian, host (Jer. iv. 6, x. 22). More truly, it is "the Name of the Lord, burning with His anger" (xxx. 27). Cp. xix. 1, xxi. 1.

and none...] Rather, *and* **there is no straggler at his appointed places** (or, times). All the portions of his host reach their appointed places (or, times) of rendezvous (Josh. viii. 14) in accurate order. Cp. v. 27.

Obs. None of them fails to observe HIS appointments (cp. xl. 26).

32. *What shall one then*] Lit. **And what** *shall one.*—When that fiery column is seen advancing southward, and the nation (ix. 3) in alarm sends to God's prophet to inquire what the result will be, the answer is forthcoming;—the one, all-sufficing, answer of faith.

hath founded Zion] Or, "grounded her firmly" (xxviii. 16).

Zion is "a city that *hath foundations*" (Heb. xi. 10); foundations worthy of the name. See Ps. lxxxvii. 1.

and the poor...] Or, *and* **in her will** *the poor of His people* **take refuge**:—in her, not in Egypt (xxx. 2, 3, *s. w.*), or in any human shelter.

NOTE A. (ON *vv.* 28, 29.)

That the Assyrian king (and not the house of David, as the Targum and a large number of commentators take it) is the *Rod* here spoken of, is made almost certain by comparing *v.* 29 with *vv.* 5, 6.

v. 29 נשבר שבט מכך.

vv. 5, 6 שבר...שבט...מכה.

See also ix. 3, x. 15, 20.

Observe, too, that נחש in xxvii. 1 appears to be used of Assyria and Babylon.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 29.)

The relations of contrast and resemblance between xiv. 29—32 and xi. 1—8 will be seen on comparing the following expressions:—

xi.		xiv.
v. 1. ויצא	*v.* 29. ...	יצא
משרשיו		משרש
יפרה		פריו ...
4. דלים	30. ...	דלים

xi.		xiv.
v. 4. ימית	*v.* 30. ...	המתי
והכה	29. ...	מכך
בשבט		שבט ...
ענוי	32. ...	עניי
7. תרעינה	30. ...	ורעו
ירבצו		ירבצו ...
8. צפעוני	29. ...	צפע

CHAPTER XV.

The lamentable state of Moab.

THE burden of Moab. ° Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid

CHAP. XV. As in the history of David's conquests the Philistines came first, and then Moab (2 S. viii. 1, 2); so here, in the prophet's survey of that "shaking" of nations, which is to prepare for the coming-in of the future Kingdom of God (cp. Jer. xlvii. 1, xlviii. 1).

After the schism, Moab belonged to the ten tribes (2 K. i. 1, iii. 4). It rebelled after Ahab's death, and seems to have remained independent (ib. iii. 27).

Nebo, Medeba, Heshbon, Elealeh, &c., were in the northern part of the original "land of Moab:" out of which Moab had been driven by Sihon. After the Conquest this

waste, *and* [1]brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, *and* brought to silence;

2 He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: [a]on all their heads *shall be* baldness, *and* every beard cut off.

3 In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, [†]weeping abundantly.

4 And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard *even* unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him.

5 My heart shall cry out for Moab; [1]his fugitives *shall flee* unto Zoar, an [b]heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of [†]destruction.

6 For the waters of Nimrim shall

[1] Or, *cut off.*

[a] Jer. 48. 37, 38. Ezek. 7. 18.

[†] Heb. *descending into weeping*: or, *coming down with weeping.*

[‖] Or, *to the borders thereof, even to Zoar, as an heifer.*

[b] Jer. 48. 5, 34.

[†] Heb. *breaking.*

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district was assigned to Reuben (Josh. xiii. 15—21). It is generally assumed by commentators that Moab had regained possession of this northern tract owing to the weakening of the trans-Jordanic tribes by Hazael (2 K. x. 33), and Tiglath-Pileser (2 K. xv. 29): and was now beheld by the prophet as suffering under an attack of Sargon or Salmaneser.

The *undertone* of the "burdens," as applying to Israel, becomes plainer, when we compare the 48th ch. of Jeremiah (which abounds in allusions to Isai. xv, xvi).

Note especially in *v.* 17: "How is the *rod of strength* (*s. w. a.* Ps. cx. 2; Ezek. xix. 12, 14) broken!"

v. 38: "a vessel wherein is no pleasure" (*s. w. a.* Hos. viii. 8).

v. 7: "his priests and his princes" (*s. w. a.* Neh. ix. 32; cp. Lam. i. 19).

vv. 26, 42; "against the Lord hath he magnified himself" (cp. Isai. v. 24).

Obs. 1. In 1 K. xi. 7, we are told that "Solomon builded *a high place* (*s. w. a.* Jer. xlviii. 35; Isai. xvi. 12; Ezek. xx. 29) for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem," on the southern part of the Mount of Olives;—as if pointing towards the mountains of Moab (which are distinctly visible from Jerusalem).

Obs. 2. Thus Solomon became a chief leader in the assault upon Israel's national vocation;—as Moab had been (Num. xxii. 1, 2; Ps. lxxxiii. 8). Cp. on ch. xxv. 10—12.

1. *Because*] Or, **Verily.** Lit. "It is that...;" as if assigning a reason for the outburst of grief.

in the night] The dark night of the Assyrian troubles: cp. xxi. 11, xvii. 14.

laid waste] Jer. xlviii. 8, 18. Cp. Jer. vi. 26, xii. 12.

brought to silence] Or, **cut off**; *s. w. a.* vi. 5.

On *Ar*, the capital of Moab, cp. Num. xxi. 15. *Kir* is probably Kir-chareseth (xvi. 7; 2 K. iii. 25).

2. In his despair, Moab *is gone up to Bayith and Dibon, the high-places*,—on which his idol-gods are. In Josh. xiii. 17 "the high-places of Baal" (cp. Num. xxii. 41) are mentioned next to Dibon.

Dibon (now Dhiban, where the "Moabite stone" was found) stands on two hills (Tristram, 'Land of Moab,' p. 137); cp. Jer. xlviii. 18.

Obs. In Deut. xxviii. 65, the Samaritan has *dibon* for the word rendered "sorrow" (nearly *s. w. a.* in Lev. xxvi. 16); prop. "pining away."

over (or, **upon**) *Nebo*] on which, according to Jerome, there was an image of Chemosh, and on which are now stone-circles and dolmens (Tristram, 'L. M.' p. 329).

baldness] The hair being cut off in mourning; iii. 24, xxii. 12; Amos viii. 10.

3. *on the tops...*] Or, "on their house-tops (xxii. 1) and in their **market-places.**"

weeping abundantly] Or, "running down with tears."

4. *unto Jahaz*] on the northern border of Moab (Deut. ii. 32).

the armed soldiers] Unable to give help to the chief cities.

his life...] Or, **every man's soul is grieved in him.**

5. *My heart*] Cp. xxi. 3, 4. He pities Moab—poor, stricken, heifer!—for her own sake, and because in her fall he cannot but see the type of a yet sadder event,—"the spoiling of the daughter of his people" (xxii. 4).

his fugitives...] Or, **her** *fugitives flee* **even** *unto Zoar*,—in the remote south; to escape the northern army.

(like) *an heifer of three years old*] An untamed heifer, rushing along with loud, hopeless, bellowings (Jer. xlviii. 34, xxxi. 18, l. 11; cp. Gen. xv. 9).—Pliny is quoted as saying: "Domitura boum in trimatu."

for by the...] Lit. *for* **at the ascent** *of Luhith, with weeping shall* **one ascend it.**

in the way of] As they are hurrying towards *Horonaim*, they "raise a cry of destruc-

† Heb. *desolations.*

be †desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

7 Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away

‖ Or, *valley of the Arabians.*

to the ‖brook of the willows.

8 For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-elim.

† Heb. *additions.*

9 For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring †more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Moab is exhorted to yield obedience to Christ's kingdom. 6 Moab is threatened for her pride. 9 The prophet bewaileth her. 12 The judgment of Moab.

SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from ‖†Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.

‖ Or, *Petra.* † Heb. *A rock.*

2 For it shall be, *that*, as a wandering bird ‖cast out of the nest, *so* the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.

‖ Or, *a nest forsaken.*

3 †Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide

† Heb. *Bring.*

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tion;" such as men raise when confronted with inevitable ruin.

6. *the hay is...*] Or, **the grass is withered** (*s. w. a.* xl. 7), **the herbage hath failed.**

7. Their hoarded treasures **shall be carried** *away* (cp. viii. 4) *unto the valley of willows*;—according to Rashi, to Babylon (Ps. cxxxvii. 2): cp. Jer. xlviii. 36. Others render, "across the brook of willows,"—supposed to be the southern boundary of Moab.

8. *the howling thereof*] Or, "her wailing" (cp. xiv. 31).

9. *Dimon*] Seemingly modelled after "Dibon." It may mean "silence" (allied to "Dumah," xxi. 11).

I will bring...] Or, "I will appoint (Hos. vi. 11) yet more unto Dimon;"—yet further sorrows.

lions...] (2 K. xvii. 25). Or, **a lion for them that escape** *of Moab*:—which may allude (Vitringa) to the troubles of the Chaldean invasion (Jer. xv. 7; cp. xlviii. 40).

CHAP. XVI. The only hope for Moab in the future lies in this,—that he renew his allegiance to the true Ruler of the land. Then will he find a gracious Throne established in righteousness in the tent of David.

In old time Moab seems to have had hard measure dealt out to her by David (2 S. viii. 2, xii. 31). But in that coming Reign exact and speedy justice should be done to her, and to all;—will she not prepare herself for it?

1. *Send ye the lamb to* (or, **of**) *the ruler*] The tribute-lambs due to Him, who rules in Zion;—who is the "governor (*s. w.*) among the nations" (Ps. xxii. 28; cp. lix. 13).

The tribute paid by Moab was in lambs and rams; 2 K. iii. 4. This tribute had been long withheld from Israel; and was not likely to be sent at present, when the northern kingdom was drawing near to dissolution. But the prophet claims it back (from Edom, it would seem, as well as from Moab) in the name of Him who would restore the fallen throne of David (cp. Amos ix. 11, 12).

from Sela to the wilderness] Or, "in the wilderness;" lit. "wilderness-wards." Edom (whose capital *Sela*, or Petra, was;—see above on 2 K. xiv. 7) had shaken off the yoke that was laid upon it by Uzziah; and during the reign of Ahaz had "smitten Judah and carried away a captivity" (2 Chro. xxviii. 17). Edom is now invited to join Moab in returning to better counsels.

The Targ. has, "They shall bring tribute to Israel's Messiah, who shall have sway over those that are in the wilderness."

2. *For*] Rather, **And.**—If they comply, then this shall follow:—*that, as a wandering bird* **by (her) emptied** *nest, so shall the daughters of Moab be* **by** *the fords of Arnon.* Since in *v.* 1, "the daughter of Zion" was a community, it is simplest to suppose the "daughters of Moab" to be the populations of the cities of Moab;—some of which were near, or on, the Arnon (cp. Josh. xiii. 16). When the robber came to rifle their nests (cp. x. 14), they flew away. As soon as he retired, they came back, though it might be timorously, to their old homes. (Cp. xxvii. 10, *s. w.*)

3. *Take...*] Or, "Apply counsel; execute the decision." It is a crisis that admits of no delay. Moab has now an opportunity, such as may not recur, of laying Zion under obligation by giving temporary shelter to those who had been scattered by the enemy.

Obs. Of old Moab had sheltered refugees from Bethlehem (Ruth i. 2); and the fruit of her hospitality had been that "a daughter of

the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth.

4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the †extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, †the oppressors are consumed out of the land.

5 And in mercy [a] shall the throne be ‖established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

6 ¶ We have heard of the [b] pride of Moab; *he is* very proud: *even* of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: *but* his lies *shall* not *be* so.

7 Therefore shall Moab [c] howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye ‖mourn; surely *they are* stricken.

8 For the fields of Heshbon languish, *and* the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come *even* unto Jazer, they

†Heb. *wringer.*
†Heb. *the traders down.*
[a] Dan. 7. 14, 27. Micah 4. 7. Luke 1. 33.
‖Or, *prepared.*
[b] Jer. 48. 29.
[c] Jer. 48. 20.
‖Or, *mutter.*

Moab" became honoured as one that "did build Israel" (Ruth iv. 11).

thy shadow] Thy protecting shelter (xxxii. 2); to guard them during the hot noon-tide of persecution (Forerius).

him that wandereth] The great earnestness with which this virtue of giving asylum to the fugitive is commended, both here and in xxi. 14, suggests that the prophet's eye glanced forward to the time, now rapidly approaching, when Judah would be called to shelter her brethren of Ephraim who fled from before the Assyrian.

4. *mine outcasts*] xi. 12.

from the face of the spoiler] The Assyrian (xxxiii. 1).

for...] This rapid transition expresses how short-lived the trial would be. "Do this: the burden will not be of long continuance; and it will involve no heavy risk:—FOR..."

the extortioner] who pressed out, and sucked up, the wealth of the cities;—he is **brought to nought** (xxix. 20, *s. w.*).

the spoiler ceaseth] Or, **devastation is come to an end** (xxix. 20, *s. w.*).

the oppressors] Lit. "He that trampled (the people) underfoot" (x. 6, *s. w.*).

5. *And in mercy shall the throne...*] Rather, *And* **there shall be a** *throne established in mercy, and* **one shall be seated** *upon it in truth*;—one, whose "mercy and truth" (Ps. lxxxv. 10, lxxxvi. 15) will be extended to thee, and grant thee a full reward for thy kindness and fidelity.

Obs. 1. Vitringa notices the expression in Heb. iv. 16: τῷ θρόνῳ τῆς χάριτος. In this throne Moab might "find grace to help" her in her time of need.

Obs. 2. Israel under the law was but as Moab—looking out from a distance towards that "throne of grace." "The law was given by Moses," who "died in the land of Moab" (Deut. xxxiv. 5), after surveying the land of promise from Nebo:—but "*grace and truth* came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). In Him "mercy was built up for ever," and "the throne of David established for all generations" (Ps. lxxxix. 2, 4).

in the tabernacle (or, **tent**) *of David*] which had "fallen down" (Amos ix. 11, cp. v. 1—3), but should now be rebuilt.

Obs. The *tent of David* seems to combine references to his royal house, and to the "tent" which he erected for the ark on Zion (2 S. vi. 17). Similarly "the tent of Joseph" in Ps. lxxviii. 67 appears to refer both to the tabernacle at Shiloh and to the tribal pre-eminence of Ephraim.

6. As in vii. 14—20, so now; when the prophet's offer of mercy meets with no response, he passes to stern reproof.

the pride] *s. w. a.* in Amos vi. 8, Hos. v. 5, vii. 10 (in all these, used of Israel); ch. xiii. 11, 19, xiv. 11.

his haughtiness] Again applied to "Moab" in xxv. 11 (*s. w. a.* ix. 9, xiii. 11).

but his lies...] Jer. xlviii. 29, 30. Or, "of no worth are his boastings." They are "*not so*" as the truth requires:—falling short of what was properly to be expected of them; unreal. (Cp. the same expression in 2 S. xxiii. 5.)

7. *Moab...for Moab*] The survivors for those who are lost.

for the foundations] So Rashi and Kimchi. Cp. the cognate noun in Jer. l. 15. (In Jer. xlviii. 31 it is, "for the *men* of Kir-Cheres.")

Kir-Chareseth is taken by many to be the "Charaka" of 2 Macc. xii. 17; now *Kerek*.

Obs. In *v.* 11 (as in Jer. xlviii. 31, 36) it is Kir-Cheres, "wall of earthenware," or, "pottery" (Lev. xv. 12; Jer. xix. 1, *s. w.*). The same word is used in xxx. 14 ("a sherd") and xlv. 9.

shall ye mourn; surely...] Or, *shall ye* **moan, utterly disconsolate**;—crushed and spirit-broken.

8. *the lords* (baälim) *of the heathen*] Or, "of the nations." The word *baälim* occurs in Num. xxi. 28 ("*the lords* of the high-places of Arnon") of the gods of Moab. *They* had now betrayed her to ruin.

wandered *through* the wilderness: her branches are ‖ stretched out, they are gone over the sea.

‖ Or, *plucked up.*

9 ¶ Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for ‖ the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.

‖ Or, *the alarm is fallen upon, &c.*

10 And [d] gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in *their* presses; I have made *their vintage* shouting to cease.

[d] Jer. 48. 33.

11 Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail.

13 This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

14 But now the LORD hath spoken,

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have broken down...] Or, *have* **beaten down her choice branches** (nearly *s. w. a.* v. 2); *they* **reached** *even unto Yazer, they* **strayed in** *the wilderness; her* **offshoots** (Vulg. propagines) **were spread abroad,** *they* **went** *over the sea.*

Obs. As with the vine of Sibmah, so with the vine that "filled the land" of Israel—stretching to Yazer (Num. xxxii. 1), to the wilderness, to the sea.—The "*baalim* of the nations" had battered down her rich branches; "battered her, and she knew it not" (Prov. xxiii. 35, *s. w.*; cp. ch. xxviii. 1).

9. *I will bewail* (or, **weep**) *with the weeping of Yazer* (**for**)... With tears as genuine as Yazer's own.

Obs. The word *Yazer* signifies, "one that helps." It is not easy to dissever the use of it in this verse from the occurrence of the verb in

(1) Deut. xxxii. 38, "Let them (the gods) rise up and help (*yazeru*) you."

(2) 2 Chro. xxviii. 23, "(Ahaz) said: Truly the gods of the kings of Syria give them help; to them will I sacrifice, that they may help (*yazeru*) me."—It is added (*v.* 25), "and in every several city of Judah he made *high-places*."

(3) Isai. xxx. 7, "The Egyptians shall help (*yazeru*) for nought and in vain."

For the contrast, see xliv. 2, "that will help (*yazer*) thee," xli. 10, 13, 14, xlix. 8; Ps. xlvi. 5.

for the shouting] Rather, *for* **on** *thy summer-fruits and* **on** *thy harvest* **a** *shouting is fallen;*—the shouting not of one who treads, but of one who tramples on, the grapes. See Jer. xlviii. 33.

10. *the plentiful field*] Lit. "vineyard-land;" Hebr. *Karmel* (*s. w. a.* x. 18, xxix. 17, &c.).

I have made...to cease] *s. w. a.* xiii. 11, xxi. 2 (cp. xiv. 4, xvii. 3, xxiv. 8, xxxiii. 8). They are God's words. Amidst all his true and deep human sympathy, the prophet is still delivering a message from God. Doubtless, therefore, his address was meant for the admonition of *Israel.*

11. *like an harp*] vibrating with thrills of grief.

Obs. 1. The speaker in the last verse was divine: and in lxiii. 15 even the terms of the present verse are applied to God; "the sounding of Thy bowels" (*s. w.*).

Truly, it must be "Immanuel," who is speaking;—the severe Ruler, who "refrains Himself" (see on lxiii. 15), though His heart be yearning over His brethren,—over those who will not believe in His goodness and truth.

Obs. 2. He weeps, because they, rejecting their own mercies, will not accept Him as their king (cp. Luke xix. 14, 41).

12. The verse may be better represented thus:—*And it shall* **be, when** *Moab* **hath presented himself, when he hath wearied himself, upon** *the high-place;* **though he go** *into his sanctuary to* **make supplication, yet** *shall he not prevail.* He will not submit to the merciful and faithful King;—he cannot extort assistance from his idol-gods.

13. *since that time*] Or, "hitherto" (A.V. in 2 S. xv. 34: followed, as here, by "now");—or, "from the beginning" (A.V. in xlviii. 3, 5, 7, *s. w.*; cp. xliv. 8, xlv. 21, *s. w.*). "Since the time," when Moab's pride and resistance to God's will was first "heard of," *v.* 6.

The doom of Moab was written in clear characters, upon the very portals of Israel's history. Balak had presented himself on the high-places of Baal; had wearied himself in endeavouring to gain some charm by which he might defeat Israel, saying, "Peradventure *I shall prevail* (*s. w.*) that we may smite them" (Num. xxii. 6; cp. *v.* 11, *s. w.*). But he failed. His soothsayer was obliged to repeatedly confess his impotence: saying, "I *cannot*" (xxii. 18, xxiv. 13, *s. w.*); "*am I at all able?*" (xxii. 38). "He hath blessed, and *I cannot reverse it*" (xxiii. 20).

saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small *and* ‖ feeble.

‖ Or, *not many.*

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Syria and Israel are threatened.* 6 *A remnant shall forsake idolatry.* 9 *The rest shall be plagued for their impiety.* 12 *The woe of Israel's enemies.*

THE burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from *being* a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.

2 The cities of Aroer *are* forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.

3 The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 And in that day it shall come to pass, *that* the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.

Obs. 1. This last passage was quoted on xiv. 27. The sentence now issued on Moab was included in the general commission given to Asshur-Babel, concerning "all nations" (xiv. 26):—was part of the irreversible decree registered *long ago* (ch. xxxvii. 26) in the archives of heaven.

Obs. 2. Moab could not destroy that "Israel," in whom God saw "no perverseness" (Num. xxiii. 21).—No, nor should Moabized Ephraim or Judah be able to do so. For "the Lord his God is with him; yea, the shout of a king is in him" (ib.).

14. *But now*] Rather, "**And** now." It is a smaller wheel, inside that larger wheel, of divine providence. The subordinate prediction (cp. on viii. 1—4) is put forth as a pledge, to those who witnessed its fulfilment, that the whole of the prophet's message should be accomplished in due time.

Within three years, as the years of an hireling] (xxi. 16)—years computed with the utmost accuracy. The hired servant would take care not to go beyond the day on which he was hired: and his employer would see that he did not leave before the day.

We have not historical data to shew the exact time either of the prophecy or of its fulfilment.

So much may be said, in general; that as Pul and Tiglath-pileser, when they invaded Samaria, attacked at the same time the trans-Jordanic districts (1 Chro. v. 26), so when Salmaneser besieged Samaria, in the fourth year of Hezekiah (2 K. xviii. 9), he may have sent a detachment to the eastern parts.

the glory of Moab shall be contemned] Or, **brought to contempt.** (Cp. on ix. 1.)

with (or, in spite of) *all that great multitude*] *s. w. a.* v. 13, 14, xvii. 12.

very small] Cp. xxiv. 6: or, "for a short time" (x. 25, xxix. 17).

CHAP. XVII. "No eastern city," observes Vitringa, "has been so often overthrown and rebuilt, as Damascus." In particular it is noted (Kitto's 'B. D.') that Timur "literally swept it with the besom of destruction," and yet before long it recovered its opulence.

This may account for the fact that Damascus, treated so severely by Tiglath-pileser about B.C. 739 (see on viii. 4), was again in a position to attract the notice of Salmaneser, when he advanced against Samaria, in 723 B.C. It seems likely that Hoshea, who prepared for his revolt from Assyria by making an alliance with So, king of Egypt, would not neglect to secure Israel's old confederate, Damascus.

In the time of Jeremiah the city had been rebuilt. But we hear no more of any *kings* of Damascus.

1. *is taken away*] Or, **put away** (i. 16, *s. w.*). Its name was erased, for the time, from the list of cities. It became, as Jerusalem itself afterwards did, "a ruinous heap" (Micah iii. 12).

2. There were two cities of Aroer in the trans-Jordanic districts (Josh. xiii. 9, 25);—which would naturally share in the devastation of Damascus and Ephraim. The name itself (as Del. remarks) was an ominous one, signifying, "the bare," or, "stripped" (Jer. li. 58; cp. xlviii. 6; and also xvii. 6).

3. *The fortress*] Hos. x. 14 (*s. w.*).

and the kingdom] Or, "royalty."

and the remnant of Syria] This also shall "cease:"—so that the population of Damascene Syria shall be wholly carried away. All these shall be *as the glory of Israel,* it is added; as though the fugitive character of *that* were known. Indeed, Hosea had said: "Ephraim,—their glory shall fly away as a bird" (ix. 11; cp. x. 5).

4. *made thin*] As when "Israel was greatly *impoverished* (*s. w.*) because of Midian" (Judg. vi. 6).

wax lean] Cp. x. 16.

5 And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

6 ¶ Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two *or* three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four *or* five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.

7 At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel.

8 And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect *that* which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the ‖ images.

‖ Or, *sun images*.

9 ¶ In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.

10 Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips:

11 In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: *but* the harvest *shall be* ‖ a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

‖ Or, *removed in the day of inheritance, and there shall be deadly sorrow*

12 ¶ Woe to the ‖ multitude of many people, *which* make a noise

‖ Or, *noise*.

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5. *gathereth the corn*] Or, **the standing corn**;—preparing an armful for the sickle.

and it shall be...] Or, **yea**, *it shall be* **as one that gleaneth** (Ruth ii. 3).

of Rephaim] A very fertile plain to the south-west of Jerusalem. (See on Josh. xv. 8.) The richness of the crop made the contrast between it and the few straggling ears of corn the more striking.

6. *Yet*...] Rather, "**And** there shall be left in him [Jacob, *v.* 4] gleanings, as **at** the shaking...." The first gathering of olives is by the hand; then the branches are shaken or beaten. But there is still a gleaning left (cp. Deut. xxiv. 20).

uppermost bough] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 9. The word seems to denote here the **crest** of the tree; and in *v.* 9 the "crest" of a hill.

The next clause is better rendered, *four or five* **apiece on its** *fruitful branches*.

7. *look to*] Or, **toward** (xxxi. 1, *s. w.*).

8. *the altars*] Not even to the divinely appointed altars,—as objects of affiance: still less to idolatrous altars (such as Ahaz set up, 2 Chro. xxviii. 24).

the groves] Or, "asherahs" (see on xiv. 12).

the images] Rather, *the* **sun-images** (xxvii. 9; Lev. xxvi. 30; 2 K. xvii. 10). Hebr. *chamman* (cp. Ἀμμων, the African sun-god).

9. *shall his strong cities*...] Or, *his* **fortress-cities** *shall be as* **the forsaken tract** (vi. 12) **of woodland and mountain-crest**, *which* **men** *forsook* **from before** (Josh. xiii. 6) *the children of I.* The LXX. has, "Thy cities shall be forsaken, in the way the Amorites and Hivites did forsake from before," &c. Those old races were driven out for their sins (the abominations of asherahs and sun-idols being mentioned among these, 1 K. xiv. 23, 24); much more must Israel, if they fell away into the same sins. (Cp. 1 K. xxi. 6; 2 K. xvi. 3, xvii. 8.)

and there shall be] Or, "and it shall be a desolation" (*s. w. a.* vi. 11).

10. *Because*] Or, **For**. It is not anticipative of the "therefore," which follows; but looks back to *v.* 9.

hast not been...] Or, **wast unmindful of thy fortress-rock**;—putting thy trust in thy "fortress-cities" (*v.* 9). Cp. Deut. xxxii. 15, 18.

therefore shalt thou plant...] Or, *therefore* **plantest thou**...*and* **settest them**....

pleasant plants] Lit. "plants of pleasant ones," Hebr. *naämanim*;—which occurs as a common noun here only. Plants from those charming *Syrian* paradises.

strange slips] Lit. "vine-slips of a stranger,"—of a strange god (cp. on i. 7). Cp. Jer. ii. 21.

11. *In the day*...] Or, *In* **a** *day* (Prov. xxvii. 1) *thou* **makest** *thy plant to grow*; so rapid was the growth of Samaria's alliance with Damascus.—Others, "In the day of thy planting thou fencest it."

and in the morning] The very next morning.

shalt thou, &c.] Rather, *thou* **makest** *thy seed* **to bud**;—**a harvest-heap** *in the day*... That luxuriant growth was only furnishing more abundant materials for the sickle in that day of wrath. (So Del.; comparing Rom. ii. 5; Jer. li. 33.)

of grief] Jer. xiv. 17 (*s. w.*).

of desperate sorrow] Jer. xxx. 15 (*s. w.*).

12—14. As in viii. 5—10, the world-

like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, *that* make a rushing like the rushing of ‖mighty waters!

‖ Or, *many.*

13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but *God* shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like ‖a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

‖ Or, *thistledown.*

14 And behold at eveningtide trouble; *and* before the morning he *is* not. This *is* the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

CHAPTER XVIII.

† *God in care of his people will destroy the Ethiopians.* 7 *An access thereby shall grow unto the church.*

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power, after it has done its work of punishment, is itself broken. (Cp. x. 12, xxxiii. 1.)

12. *Woe to the multitude*, &c.] Or, *Oh, the* **uproar** *of many* **peoples**, *that* **roar** *like the* **roaring** *of seas!* It is the gathering of the hosts, which are to carry out God's counsel: see xiii. 4, where the two leading words of this verse, "uproar" and "rushing" (or, "tumult"), both occur. Cp. Ps. lxv. 7 (*s. w.*).

the rushing] Or, "tumult" (*s. w. a.* in v. 14, xiii. 4, xxiv. 8, xxv. 5, lxvi. 6; Jer. xlviii. 45, li. 55).

13. (*God*) *shall rebuke them*] Lit. "one shall rebuke him; and he shall flee." There is no need to say *who* He is, that *is able*, with one word of chiding, to turn back the swelling tide of nations, as though it were a single man.

like a rolling thing] Or, **as whirling dust** (*s. w. a.* Ps. lxxxiii. 13; cp. ch. v. 28).

14. *And behold...*] Lit. "At eventide, and behold **terror** (Job xviii. 11, 14); before (xxviii. 4) the morning, he is not." Cp. xxix. 7.

that spoil...that rob] Rather, *that* **rob**... *that* **spoil**. The same words occur in xlii. 22, 24; and in Jer. xxx. 16. Cp. x. 6.

CHAP. XVIII. The great event described in xvii. 12—14 is to be proclaimed to the remotest nations. All are to be told how calmly He, whose abode is on "the Mount Zion," views the projects of men; allowing them time and space for developing themselves, and then with one stroke lopping off their luxuriant arrogance.

The recurrence in *v.* 5 of the words "bud" and "harvest," which have just been used in xvii. 11, where Israel was spoken of, is very noticeable. It seems to mark the same parallelism between the judgment on Israel and the judgment on the nations, which was brought forward in ch. x. 5—12. In each case it is the same principle of ungodly pride, which is chastised. The lesson to be learnt is exhibited first on a small scale, but clearly and definitely, with the strong light of prophecy bearing upon it, in the typical people: then on a far larger scale in the successive stages of the world-history. (Cp. Zeph. iii. 1—8.)

The first exemplification of this part of the prophecy was, doubtless, witnessed in the downfall of Sennacherib.

That Ethiopia was deeply interested in that event we know from ch. xxxvii. 9 (see on *v.* 2); and it appears from ch. xx that some in Israel looked to Ethiopia, as well as to Egypt, for protection.

For the warning of these faithless men, as well as for the comfort of the "disciples" (viii. 16), the prophet here proclaims the predestined frustration of imperial pride; and the ultimate re-gathering of scattered Israel through some signal interposition of divine power.

It is surprising that there should have been any controversy as to what the "nation" is, that is spoken of in *vv.* 2 and 7. The following considerations appear sufficient to fix the interpretation.

(1) The last chapter set the nations before us as crowding together to *spoil* Israel. Here we have a people whose land is *spoiled*.

(2) The nations were there represented under the figure of *rushing waters;* as in viii. 5—8 the Assyrian was compared to "*the waters of the river*, strong and mighty." Here we have a people, whose land "*the rivers* have spoiled."

(3) The word rendered "trodden down" occurs only in one other place in the Bible; ch. xxii. 5. It is there used of the "Valley of Vision" being trodden down by invading enemies. (Cp. v. 5, x. 6, xxviii. 18.)

(4) Yet, though trodden down, this people is described as "terrible from its origin downwards:"—a description which scarcely belongs to any nation at all except Israel; certainly to none with anything like the same fulness as to Israel. Israel's national birth took place amidst "terrible things." "Where is there any like Thy people Israel, a nation unique in the earth, which God went to redeem to Himself as a people, and to win to Himself a name, and to do for you great

WOE to the land shadowing with wings, which *is* beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

2 That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, *saying*, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation ‖scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; ‖†a nation meted out and trodden down, ‖whose land the rivers have spoiled!

3 All ye inhabitants of the world,

‖ Or, *outspread and polished.*
‖ Or, *a nation that meteth out, and treadeth down.*
† Heb. *a nation of line, line, and treading under foot.*
‖ Or, *whose land the rivers despise.*

things, even *terrible things* for thy land?" (2 S. vii. 23; cp. Exod. xv. 14—16; Deut. xi. 25.)

In the following chapter (xix. 17) we have this "terrible" character vividly portrayed: "The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt; whosoever maketh mention thereof, unto him they turn in fear."

(5) The people, it is said (*v.* 7), shall be brought "as a present unto the Lord of Hosts;" which is said of Israel in lxvi. 20. Cp. Zeph. iii. 11; ch. lv. 12.

(6) A standard is to be lifted up (*v.* 3) to the nations, to prepare them for bringing this wondrous tribute to Zion. The same is the case, when the nations bring back Zion's children (xlix. 22).

(7) The remaining parts of the description in *v.* 2 (A. V. "a nation scattered and peeled," &c.), obtain a far more natural interpretation, when referred to Israel, than they do on any other hypothesis. Indeed, if the nation be supposed to be Egypt or Ethiopia, every one of those terms must have an artificial meaning forced upon it.

1. *Woe to the land...*] Or, **Ho to** *the land of* **overshadowing** *wings*,—spreading out her eagle wings of empire (as Ethiopia was then doing). Compare the image of Assyria ("a cedar with a *shadowing* shroud") in Ezek. xxxi. 3. In xxx. 2, 3 "the *shadow* of Egypt" occurs twice. Aq. has σκιὰ σκιὰ πτερύγων.

Some render "resounding with wings;" the wings being "squadrons" of armed men. Delitzsch (cpg. vii. 18) thinks that the crowds of people gathering under the banner of Ethiopia are compared to swarms of the *tse-tse* fly (in the Galla language, *tsaltsalya*).

Canon Cook (in his 'Pianchi Inscr.' p. 13) gives the figure of a "*disk with double wings*," as a symbol of Ethiopian royalty.

beyond the rivers of Ethiopia] The land "beyond" the numerous rivers which feed the Nile is Highland Ethiopia; from which most of them take their rise.

2. The land is addressed (in a way that is not unsuitable to Ethiopia under Tirhakah) as sending her envoys (lvii. 9, *s. w.*) *by sea*, **and** *in vessels of* **papyrus**;—probably, along the Red Sea and down the Nile.

Tirhakah is represented by Megasthenes (in Strabo xv. 1, 6) as having extended his conquests to the Pillars of Hercules. That he marched into Egypt to oppose Sennacherib, we know. Such a man might actually send envoys to negotiate an alliance with Judah beforehand (or, to offer his congratulations after the tidings of the great Assyrian catastrophe reached him, 2 Chro. xxxii. 23). The picture is, however, an ideal one; though its forms may be drawn from nature.

Go, ye swift messengers] This is Ethiopia's commission to her envoys. They are to go to that strange people, of whose greatness Arabia and Abyssinia had heard many wonderful things 300 years before, when the Queen of Sheba learnt to admire and praise the God of Israel (1 K. x. 9);—in whose land they themselves 200 years before had suffered a terrible overthrow (2 Chro. xiv. 9—13);—but which now, in its extreme feebleness, seems to be in the grasp of that all-conquering northern empire.

to a nation scattered] Lit. **dragged**; dragged away in the net of many a conqueror (Ps. xxviii. 3, *s. w.*).

peeled] Or, "flayed:" lit. having the hair plucked off its skin (*s. w. a.* in l. 6);—in cruel insult.

Aben-Ezra says: "The Israelites are meant, who were dragged away from their homes like sheep, until they were flayed from the dragging."

terrible] Of Israel as a people it might be said, that "amidst terrible deeds it was marvellously formed" (Ps. cxxxix. 14). Its whole history was "a marvel," a "terrible thing" (Exod. xxxiv. 10).

from their beginning] Or, "since it was" (Nahum ii. 8).

hitherto] Or, **and onward** (1 S. xviii. 9). The Targ. has: "Unto a people, mighty in times past, in times to come." Knobel: "It has always been terrible, and will always be so."

meted out]—to whom the measuring-line of God's rule of Right has been so perpetually applied; often with ruinous effect (*s. w. a.* 2 K. xxi. 13; Lam. ii. 8: cp. ch. xxxiv. 17). In their history the world might see the workings of divine justice tabulated "line by line."

So even Rashi, referring it to Israel: "Because vengeance was inflicted on it in its iniquity, measure by measure; and it was given up to trampling."

trodden down] (See above, Introd.) Lit. "(a people) of treading down;"—subjected

and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

4 For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will ‖ consider in my dwelling place like a clear heat ‖ upon herbs, *and* like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

‖ Or, *regard my at dwelling.*
‖ Or, *after rain.*

5 For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away *and* cut down the branches.

6 They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

7 ¶ In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people ‖ scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

‖ Or, *outspread and polished, &c.*

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *The confusion of Egypt.* 11 *The foolishness of their princes.* 18 *The calling of Egypt to the church.* 23 *The covenant of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel.*

THE burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift

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constantly to it; as in x. 6, "the people of My wrath." LXX. ἔθνος καταπεπατημένον.

have spoiled] Nearly *s. w. a.* in xvii. 14.

3. This is the prophet's reply;—to Ethiopia, and in it to all the nations of the earth. He calls on them to observe the signal event that is about to take place on the holy *mountains*. (Cp. xiv. 25.)

see ye, when...] Rather, **as when a standard is lifted up upon** *mountains*, **shall ye see** (it); **as when** *a trumpet* **is blown, shall ye hear** (it). This divine act shall stand forth before the nations perfectly clear and distinct.

4. *I will take my rest*] Or, **be quiet** (*s. w. a.* vii. 4, xiv. 7, lxii. 1; Ps. lxxxiii. 1; Ruth iii. 18).

will consider] Or, *will* **look on**. He is seemingly inactive, while the Assyrian is maturing his own plans day by day. But His eye contemplates all. Nay; it is only because His Providential Will co-operates with the Assyrian, that he prospers as he does. God supplies man with mental or physical powers, and with favourable opportunities for their exercise;—even as He provides the vine with its means of growth; now shining on it "as with clear heat in the sun-light," now refreshing it "as with a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest" (the fruit-harvest).

upon herbs] Rather, "upon the light;"—heat, such as floats upon the bright sunshine.

5. When the invader's plan seems ripe for execution, it is suddenly marred. (Cp. Job xv. 33.)

is perfect] Or, "is past."

and the sour grape...] Rather, *and the* **blossom becomes a** *ripening* **grape-bunch.** *the branches*] Or, "spreading shoots" (Jer. xlviii. 32, *s. w.*).

6. The meaning of the allegory is now made plain: for the once victorious army is left a prey to the **ravenous bird** (xlvi. 11) *of the mountains*.

7. *shall the present be brought*] The same words occur together also in Ps. lxviii. 29, lxxvi. 11. The verb is used in ch. lv. 12 of Israel "led back" with joy from exile. Cp. Ps. xlv. 15 (*s. w.*).

of a people] Rather (omitting *of*), **a people**. The once oppressed, but now honoured, people is itself the gift (lxvi. 20).

the place of the name] Cp. Deut. xii. 5; 1 K. viii. 29.

the mount Zion]—which is elevated above all the mountains (ii. 1—4). The prophecy ever returns to Zion; i. 27, iv. 5, viii. 18, xii. 6, xiv. 32.

CHAP. XIX. The "shaking of all nations" shall affect Egypt also; which appeared at that time no less firmly established than she had been for 1300 years past.

The issue would be the prostration of the idol-gods of Egypt:—a most unlikely event at the time when Isaiah wrote this prophecy. For we find from Herodotus that the king who then reigned over Egypt was a priest of Hephaistus (or, Phtha). Idolatry was then more strongly rooted than ever. This, however, is but one side of the prophecy. It is also foretold that in Egypt itself there should be cities "speaking the language of Canaan;" and that the Egyptians should *know the* LORD. Such a prediction must then have appeared the wildest of dreams. Egypt had

cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

† Heb. *mingle.*

2 And I will †set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, *and* kingdom against kingdom.

† Heb. *shall be emptied.*

† Heb. *swallow up.*

3 And the spirit of Egypt †shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will †destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the

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been a powerful and highly civilized nation, when Jacob came down to sojourn in it. Its architecture still excites the admiration of European observers: presenting (we are told) "displays of noble conception, elegant taste, and exquisite skill" such as "would not suffer by a comparison with the most admired productions of ancient or modern genius" (Dr Olin). Of the colossal statue of Rameses Dean Stanley says: "Nothing which now exists in the world can give any notion of what the effect must have been, when he was erect." Mighty as Babel or Asshur were, neither of them could have for Israel the venerable associations which surrounded Egypt. That *her* religious organization should be dissolved, would seem almost as unlikely as that nature's own course should be changed.

Obs. Each of the two parts of this prophecy had a practical bearing on Israel.

(1) Not only the men of Ephraim, but (it would appear, cp. xxxi. 1) some in Judah too, were at this time bent on throwing themselves upon the protection of Egypt against Assyria. The predictions of Egypt's coming humiliation, contained in this chapter, supplied a basis on which the prophet might more effectively rest his warnings against the Egyptian alliance;—which was both wrong in itself, and impolitic as well.

(2) The tender sympathy expressed for *penitent* Egypt in *vv.* 20—23 must have assured all Israelites that, if *they* returned to their God, He would "be entreated of them and heal them." If only they would "vow a vow, and perform it," He would send them a mighty "Saviour."

1. *upon a swift cloud*] His tranquil power was compared to "a cloud of dew" (xviii. 4); the same power in active exercise moves as a swift cloud-chariot. (Cp. Ps. xviii. 10—12, civ. 3.)

the idols] Or, **idol-gods** (ii. 18, x. 10, 11).

be moved] **Shake**:—in consternation; *s. w. a.* vi. 4, vii. 2. (Cp. James ii. 15.)

at his presence] Lit. "from before Him" (*s. w. a.* Ps. lxviii. 1; Joel ii. 6; cp. Num. x. 35; ch. lxiv. 1, 2, 3).

At the time of the Exodus God had "executed judgment on all the gods of Egypt" (Exod. xii. 12). But the powers of evil had long regained their sway. Now, an end was to be put to their dominion. They, who had so long ruled over Egypt, "the mother of superstitions," should find their despotic empire crumble to pieces (Jer. xliii. 12, 13, xlvi. 25; Ezek. xxx. 13).

The first definite inroad upon it was made by the Persian king, Cambyses; who was fanatically hostile to the idol-worship and Apis-worship of Egypt. But far more effectual was the influence of the Jews, who settled in Egypt in large numbers; and who, by their Hellenistic version of the Old Testament Scriptures, prepared the way for the downfall of idolatry both in Egypt and throughout the Roman empire. During the first four centuries of our era, Christian theology had one of her chief seats, and gained some of her greatest triumphs, in the land of Clement and Origen, of Athanasius and Cyril. Afterwards, when darker days came on and paganizing tendencies shewed themselves, a stern chastisement was allowed to fall upon it. Yet the sword of the Khalifs was, at any rate, a security that the "idols of Egypt" should not again rear their heads.

2. *I will set*] Or, **stir up** (ix. 11, *s. w.*), Aq. στασιάσω.

From Herodotus and Diodorus combined, it appears that on the death of Sethos (the king against whom Sennacherib was advancing) there was a period of anarchy, which lasted two years, and was followed by a dodekarchy. This, after 15 years, was put an end to by Psammetichus, who became sole king; chiefly through the help of Greek mercenaries, Ionians and Carians (B. C. 670). Under him the Chinese-like isolation of Egypt was broken down; greatly to the dissatisfaction of many of his subjects. Herodotus mentions that 240,000 of his Egyptian troops left him and emigrated to Ethiopia.

kingdom against kingdom] LXX. νόμος ἐπὶ νόμον.

3. *the spirit*]—the intelligence and culture—*shall fail*, lit. "be made empty" (xxiv. 1).

I will destroy] Or, "swallow up:"—the word used of the rod of Aaron "swallowing up" the rods of the Egyptian magicians (Exod. vii. 12). With infinitely greater reason would the divine counsel "swallow up" the cunningly devised policy of Egypt. (Cp. on xxv. 7.)

they shall seek **unto**]—shall have recourse to them for information and advice (viii. 19).

charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

‖ Or, *shut up.*

4 And the Egyptians will I ‖ give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

5 And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

6 And they shall turn the rivers far away; *and* the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

7 The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, † and be no more.

† Heb. *and shall not be.*

8 The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

9 Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave ‖ networks, shall be confounded.

‖ Or, *white works.*

10 And they shall be broken in the † purposes thereof, all that make sluices *and* ponds † for fish.

† Heb. *foundations.*

† Heb. *of living things.*

11 ¶ Surely the princes of Zoan *are* fools, the counsel of the wise counsellers of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I *am* the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

12 Where *are* they? where *are* thy wise *men?* and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

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4. *a cruel lord*] This has been referred to Sargon (Knob.); to Psammetichus (Del.); to Cambyses; and to Darius Ochus.—It is applicable generally to the successive rulers of Egypt;—Chaldean and Persian, Greek and Roman, Saracen and Turkish.

5. *from the sea*] The Egyptians now commonly speak of "bahr-en-Nil," *the Nile-sea* (as the Hindus call the Ganges *derya*, or, sea). In Nahum iii. 8, No (that is, Thebes in Upper Egypt) is said to have her rampart on "the sea."

shall be wasted] Or, **parched up.** The drying up of the Nile represents the failure of all that was essential to the national life.

6. *And they shall turn...*] Rather, *And* **the rivers** (the Nile-arms) **shall become loathsome.** (Ges., Del., Ew. &c.)

the brooks of...] Or, *the* **streams** *of the* **fortified cities** (xxxvii. 25) *are emptied and* **parched up**:—so that the besieger can approach the walls. (Cp. Nahum iii. 8.) The word rendered "fortified cities" (*matsor*) probably *alludes* to the name of Egypt (*mitsrayim*).

7. *The paper reeds...*] Rather, **The marsh-grass by the Nile, on the brink of the Nile.** The LXX. has τὸ ἄχι: cp. Gen. xli. 2, 18.

and every thing sown] whether in garden-land or in arable, **by** (beside) **the Nile.**

8. *into the brooks*] Rather, *into* **the Nile** (now dried up, *v.* 5).

9. *fine flax*] out of which the famed linen yarns of Egypt were made, 1 K. x. 28; Prov. vii. 16; Ezek. xxvii. 7.

networks] Or, "cotton" (Del.). LXX. τὴν βύσσον.

10. *And they shall be broken...*] Rather, *And* **her foundations shall be crushed in pieces** (cp. Ezek. xxx. 4). This is taken (Knob., Del.) to represent the higher castes, the supporters of the fabric of society. The calamity reaches to the lowest ranks; the second clause says: *all that* **work for hire are grieved in soul**,—drooping in hopeless despondency. LXX, λυπηθήσονται καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς πενέσουσι.

11. *Surely...are fools*] Or, "Utterly foolish are..." Zoan was the old capital of the Pharaohs (xxx. 4; Num. xiii. 22).

A recent traveller writes of Zoan as being "in stark silent devastation, one of the grandest ruins in the world." He adds: "I cannot recollect any [ruin], that impressed me so deeply with the sense of fallen and deserted magnificence" (Mr Macgregor's 'Rob Roy,' pp. 75, 78).

the counsel...] Lit. "as for the wise counsellors of Pharaoh, counsel is become sottish." None could foresee the impending ruin. The priestly "wise men," and the princes of royal descent, were alike infatuated.

12. *Where are they?...*] Rather, *Where,* **then,** *are thy wise men? and let them* **declare** (xli. 22) *now unto thee.* The challenge is the one so often pressed on the heathen in the second part of Isaiah (xli. 22, 26, xliii. 9, xlv. 21, xlviii. 14).

purposed] v. 17, xiv. 24, 27. Cp. xxiii. 8, 9.

13 The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, *even* ‖† *they that are* the stay of the tribes thereof.

14 The LORD hath mingled † a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken *man* staggereth in his vomit.

15 Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

16 In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shaketh over it.

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

18 ¶ In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak † the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city ‖ of destruction.

19 In that day shall there be an

‖ Or, *governors.* † Heb. *corners.* † Heb. *a spirit of perversities.*

† Heb. *the lip.*

‖ Or, *of Heres,* or, *of the sun.*

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13. *Noph*] In Hos. ix. 6, "Moph;" which is nearer to the Greek, "Memphis." This was an ancient city (near the site of the modern Cairo), which Psammetichus made his capital.

they have also...] Or, *even they have* **made Egypt to err**, *who are* **the corner-stone** *of her tribes.*

Obs. The language in *vv.* 13—15 seems studiously to re-echo the terms that had been employed of Judah or Ephraim in iii. 12, ix. 14, 16. Cp. also xxviii. 7.

14. *hath mingled*] as strong spices are "mingled" in the wine-cup.

a perverse spirit] Lit. "a spirit of perversion." Vulg. "vertiginis."

as a drunken man] As it is by God's ordinance (observes Schmieder) that the abuse of His good gift of wine is followed by intoxication; so is it no less of His ordaining, that the misuse of His gifts of national intelligence, power, and prosperity issues in a heady and boastful self-confidence; which leads men to miscalculate their dangers and resort to essentially weak expedients.

15. *Neither shall there...*] Or, "Neither shall anything be **wrought out** for Egypt, which head or tail, **palm-branch** or rush (ix. 14), may **work**." All that is attempted shall miscarry; leaving no *effective result* behind it.

16. *the shaking of the hand*] Cp. xi. 15, (xxx. 32). Every motion of *that* hand has instant efficacy.

17. *a terror*] Or, "an object of awe,"—of religious awe.

every one that...] Or, "whosoever maketh mention of it," the land of Judah, **unto him they turn in fear** (construction as in Hos. iii. 5). The land of Judah, from which these prophecies concerning Egypt emanated, is viewed by them with religious respect.

the counsel...] Or, **the purpose** *of the Lord of hosts, which He* **purposeth concerning them** (*s. w. a.* xiv. 26).

18. *shall five cities...*] Or, *shall* **there be** *five cities...* **that speak**...*and* **that swear**.—"*Five* cities" would imply that a solid footing had been gained in the land. (Cp. Jer. xliv. 1.)

the language of Canaan]—the language which had once been that of the debased Canaanites, but which had been rescued (as the land itself was) out of its corruption, and sanctified by being employed as the vehicle for the communication of God's purposes to mankind. This language, saturated with terms such as no other language supplied for the exhibition of religious truth, was, no doubt, largely spoken in Egypt by the numerous Jewish settlers; and there it transfused its spirit into the Greek forms of speech. As regards the education of the world, Hellenistic Greek was, practically, "the language of Canaan." (Cp. Zeph. iii. 9.)

swear to the LORD] Binding themselves to Him by an oath of *allegiance* (xlv. 23).

one shall be called (*s. w. a.* iv. 3, lxii. 4)] *City of* **overthrow**; Hebr. IR-*ha*-HERES;—because of the evidence it should present of the *overthrow* of *heathenism:* the verb *harás* being used in the command given to Israel (Exod. xxiii. 24) to destroy the idols of Canaan, and in the account of Gideon's overthrowing the altar of Baal (Judg. vi. 25).

It is no more implied by this, that the city would have the actual name *Ir-ha-heres*, than in i. 26, that Zion's future name would be *Ir-Tsedeq* (or, in lxii. 4, *Cheftsi-bah*). In each case the title marks the character of the city.

It is interesting to observe how thoroughly the Egyptian Jews of the third century before Christ understood the appellation to be descriptive: for the LXX. has πόλις ἀσεδέκ, "city of righteousness" (i. 26);—implying that the effectual overthrow of paganism could

altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD;

20 And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

21 And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall

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only be attained through the establishment of the kingdom of God, which is righteousness.

Obs. In the ideal title *Ir-ha-heres* there was, probably, latent an allusion to the name of *On* (Gen. xli. 15), or Heliopolis; the Hebrew equivalent of which would be IR-*ha*-CHERES (which indeed is the reading of some MSS.; see Note A). If Heliopolis, the great seat of Egyptian learning, were to be overthrown, this must be, surely, because the old Egyptian idolatry had fallen into decay.—Yes! the philosophy and religion of Egypt had the doom, "Overthrown," henceforth inscribed upon them: and in their place should rise up a purer philosophy, resting upon divine oracles.

The ruins of Heliopolis did not proclaim the downfall of "the gods of Egypt" (cp. Jer. xliii. 13; Ezek. xxx. 17) so plainly, as did the growth of a Jewish and Christian literature in the city of Alexandria.

19. *an altar to the* LORD] A strange conception for one who wrote at a time when the old Egyptian priesthood seemed more powerful than ever! Yet that there was a literal "altar to the Lord" erected in Egypt, and that this literal fulfilment of the prophecy was overtly sanctioned by a king of Egypt, who had access to Isaiah's writings in a Greek version which had been prepared 100 years before by order of an ancestor of that king,—all this is no less certain than it is striking.

It was in the district of Heliopolis, on the site of a ruined temple at Leontopolis (some 20 miles N.E. of Memphis, Joseph. 'B. J.' VII. 10), that the high-priest Onias IV built his temple, under a special licence from Ptolemy Philometor (about 150 B.C.). Onias in his petition had quoted Isaiah's words in the verse before us. Ptolemy in his reply says: "Since you say that Isaiah so long ago foretold it, we give thee licence, if according to law; *that we may not seem to have offended against God.*" (Cp. *v.* 17 above.)

The fact that language like this should have been used by a king of Egypt is, in any case, a remarkable proof of the "overthrow" of idolatry that had taken place, not at Heliopolis only, but throughout the land;—"in the midst of it," and "at its border."

So then,—apart from this singular incident,—the general symbolic meaning of the prophecy was undoubtedly fulfilled. Egypt had been for 1400 years covered with idolatrous altars and obelisks; and it must in Isaiah's time have seemed incredible that so firmly organized a system should ever be broken up. Yet such a result was brought about by a series of movements,—Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Greek,—which commenced (as the next chapter shews) almost immediately after the date of the above prediction.

a pillar at the border thereof] The Jewish synagogue first, and afterwards the Christian church, at Alexandria stood like a lofty obelisk, with the name of the Lord inscribed upon it, at the entrance of Egypt.

20. *And it shall be*] The whole of what has been mentioned in *vv.* 18, 19 shall be for "a sign and a witness:"—to testify (Josh. xxii. 27, 28, 34) that "the Lord is God."

they shall cry...oppressors,...a saviour] The language seems taken from Exod. v. 8, 15, iii. 9, xiv. 13. As of old Israel was rescued from its Egyptian oppressors, so now the Egyptians (proselytes or Jews), who cry to God, shall be set free.

Among other historical fulfilments must be reckoned the liberation of the land from the Persians (who had been its cruel oppressors) by Alexander the Great; whose name is imperishably associated with Egypt by the city which he founded. We are told, that on his approach to Pelusium he was met by vast crowds of people, who hailed him as their deliverer.

a saviour] The word commonly rendered σωτήρ by the LXX. This name emerges into general history as a title given to Ptolemy the first Greek ruler of Egypt. The sovereignty of the Ptolemies did unquestionably raise Egypt many degrees out of the darkness of its previous superstition. But the principal reference of the promise is suggested by what follows:—

and a great one] Or, **even a mighty one.** The prophet himself supplies a commentary on this expression in lxiii. 1; where Messiah is introduced saying of Himself, "I that speak in righteousness, *mighty to save*" (*s. w.*).

For "a mighty one," the LXX. and Targ. have "a judge," the Vulg. "a defender." Both these are *tenable* renderings: but Aben-Ezra, Rashi, and Kimchi take it as A. V.

21. *shall be known*] Or, "shall make Himself known" (as A. V. in Ezek. xx. 5, 9);—practically known, in the fulness of His gracious character (cp. Ps. xlviii. 3, lxxvi. 1).

shall know the LORD] and gratefully acknowledge Him;—in contrast with that proud

know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform *it*.

22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal *it:* and they shall return *even* to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

23 ¶ In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

24 In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land:

25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

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refusal to recognize Him, which marked their earlier history (Exod. v. 2, xiv. 4, 18; cp. Ezek. xxix. 6).

shall do...] Rather, **shall serve** (*v.* 23) **with** *sacrifice and oblation.* (So Targ., Aben-Ezra, Knob., Del., take it.) The word "serve" is important. The whole controversy with Pharaoh turned upon it. See Exod. iii. 12, ix. 13, x. 26, xii. 31. Cp. Ps. cii. 22; Job xxxvi. 11.

A strictly literal fulfilment occurred (Joseph. 'c. Apion.' II. 5; quoted by Vitr.), when Ptolemy Euergetes, after his victory over Seleucus, B. C. 244, came to Jerusalem, and "offered many sacrifices and made many presents;" so that in his person Egypt did homage to the true God.

22. *he shall smite and heal it*] Rather, **smiting and healing**;—the intention of healing being predominant throughout (Del.). Cp. lvii. 18, 19.

shall return even to] As in ix. 13, x. 21. There can be no question that large numbers of Egyptians became proselytes in the three centuries before Christ.

shall be intreated of them] Or, "listen to their supplications."—It is the word used in reference to the intercessions which Moses offered for the Egyptians (Exod. viii. 4, 5, 24, 25, 26, A. V. 8, 9, &c.).

23. Then the nations who had so long been rival claimants for the empire of the world,—both of whom had been Israel's oppressors, lii. 4,—shall find themselves joined in unity by their common service of God. Cp. Ps. lxxxvii. 3.

shall serve (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 21) *with the Assyrians*] So Kimchi (and Knob., Del., &c.). The LXX., Vulg., Targ., &c., "shall serve the Assyrians" (cp. Jer. xxvii. 9, 13).

24. *be the third with*] Or, **be a third to**;—an intermediary, through whom they will be united to each other.

in the midst of the land] Or, *of the* **earth** (Gen. xlviii. 16; Exod. viii. 22). So at last the benediction given to Abraham will be realized (Gen. xxii. 18).

25. *Whom...shall bless*] Or, "Forasmuch as the Lord of Hosts hath blessed him."—While Israel was untrue to its vocation, Assyria and Egypt remained mere worldly powers and Israel was constantly crushed between them. But now Israel communicates blessings to them, and yet retains her own pre-eminence. Egypt, obedient to God, has a share in the title "people of God;" Asshur, new-created by God's Spirit, is His "handywork" (lx. 21, lxiv. 8; cp. xliii. 7; Ps. c. 3); but Israel still has the special prerogative of being God's "heritage" (Deut. xxxii. 9; Ps. xciv. 14).

Obs. The wide-spread influence of the Jews over Syria and the adjacent countries under the Syro-Macedonian kings, as well as over Egypt under the Ptolemies, may represent an initial stage in the fulfilment of the prophecy. A second stage commenced with that great day, which sent devout men back from Jerusalem into Egypt and Libya on one side, into Parthia, Media, Elam, and Mesopotamia, on the other (Acts ii. 9, 10), to tell how "God, having raised up His Son Jesus (the Prince and the Saviour), had sent Him to bless" the Jews first, and in them all nations (Acts ii. 39, iii. 25, 26).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 18.)

There are good reasons for adhering to חרס, as the true reading.

(1) If חרס had been in the primitive text, its reference to Heliopolis would have been so simple and obvious, that it is scarcely possible the enigmatic הרס should have supplanted it.

(2) Aq. and Theod. have Ἀρες; and the Syriac *Hares.*

(3) The Targ., while it gives the reference to Heliopolis, shews that it had the reading חרס: "City of the House of the Sun, *which is to be destroyed.*"

CHAPTER XX.

A type prefiguring the shameful captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia.

IN the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

2 At the same time spake the LORD † by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

† Heb. *by the hand of Isaiah.*

3 And the LORD said, Like as my

CHAP. XX. As the general prophecy concerning Asshur-Babel in chh. xiii. 1—xiv. 23 was followed by a more specific prediction in xiv. 24, 25 relating to the approaching Assyrian disaster; so the larger view of Egypt's future, which was presented in ch. xix, is here succeeded by a very definite statement concerning an immediate humiliation that was impending over both Egypt and the power which for the time was united with it,—Ethiopia.

The bearing of the prophecy upon Israel is distinctly seen in *v.* 6. The people had looked on the political union of Ethiopia and Egypt as a hopeful event for themselves.—The Kushite kings, who were now in ascendancy, were evidently disposed to resist the imperial policy of Assyria. An Egyptian alliance, then, seemed the best way of opposing Assyria.

That this feeling prevailed (during the early part of Hezekiah's reign) among the tribes of the northern kingdom, is quite certain (2 K. xvii. 4). Indeed their leanings had all along been towards Egypt.

Egypt had been the asylum of their first king, Jeroboam (1 K. xi. 40). Their religious schism took its symbols, the Golden Calves, from Egypt. Nay, and had not Ephraim, their great progenitor, been himself born in Egypt?—born of an Egyptian mother, the daughter of the priest of Heliopolis (Gen. xli. 50), who, as head of the Egyptian hierarchy, stood next in dignity to Pharaoh himself?

Egypt had been the chief instigator of the schism. It was now to be the chief cause of the dissolution of the northern kingdom. Assyria—said Isaiah—shall conquer and lead away captive those mighty and wise men, in whom you are placing your trust.

1. *In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod*] The army sent by Sennacherib against Jerusalem was commanded by a person of the same name (or title), 2 K. xviii. 17.

This siege of Ashdod was, probably, meant (like Sennacherib's siege of Lachish) to open the way into Egypt; as at a later day Alexander's siege of Gaza certainly was. The importance of the place, as well as its strength, is shewn by the fact that, in the next century, Psammetichus spent 29 years in besieging it.

This siege of Ashdod may have been in the first year of Hezekiah (see on xiv. 28 f.).

when Sargon...sent him] As Sennacherib afterwards "sent" probably the same general against Jerusalem;—the king himself remaining in command of the main army. (On the supposed discovery of the name "Sargon" in the Assyrian inscriptions, see Note A.)

and fought] There is no ground for putting this second part of the verse in brackets. The natural meaning of the words is that the siege was concluded in the year in which it was begun. In that year,—whether during the siege or not,—Isaiah received the command which follows.

2. *spake...by Isaiah*] Or, "by means of." Through him, not only as a prophet, but also as a sign and wonder.

loose the sackcloth] Which, it seems, he wore habitually; as if he were in perpetual mourning during this disastrous period (cp. xxxvii. 1, 2, l. 3).

naked] Probably, with nothing on but his tunic. (Cp. 1 S. xix. 24; 2 S. vi. 14, 20; John xxi. 7.) Such, or worse, should soon be the condition of the wise princes and valiant commanders of Egypt and Ethiopia.

But why so strange and painful a dramatization of the suffering in reserve for these nations?

The prophet's humiliation was for Israel's good. They had become so "dull of hearing," that nothing short of "a sign and a wonder" could sufficiently arrest their attention. Isaiah's symbolic action was a pledge to them of his being in earnest in what he taught: whilst there were two lessons, of the deepest practical moment, contained in the announcement which accompanied that action:—

(1) *First.* How vain was it to rely on the protection of men, who were themselves soon to go into captivity (cp. xlvi. 2).

(2) *Secondly.* If God were thus wielding Assyria as "the staff of His anger" against Egypt and Ethiopia, what hope of escape could Israel have,—except in penitence?

Was it an unseemly thing for a prophet of the Lord to put off his clothes? But would it not be far more unseemly that king and prophets, priests and people,—yes, "the people of the Lord,"—should *all* be led away from their land, as dishonoured captives?

To avert such a calamity, if it were possible, Isaiah was ready to "walk naked and barefoot." If by such a portent the people were roused

servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years *for* a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia;

4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away † the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with † *their* buttocks uncovered, to the † shame of Egypt.

† Heb. *the captivity of Egypt.*

† Heb. *nakedness.*

5 And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

6 And the inhabitant of this † isle shall say in that day, Behold, such *is* our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

† Or, *country.*

to reflection and amendment, the servant of the Lord would be amply repaid for the shame he endured. If it should be otherwise,—if Israel's "wound were incurable,"—well might he cry out as did his brother-prophet: "Therefore I will wail and howl; I will go stripped and naked (*s. w.*)" (Micah i. 8, 9).

3. *Like as my servant Isaiah*] The designation "My servant" is one of high honour. It is given to Abraham (Gen. xxvi. 24), to Moses (Num. xii. 7; 2 K. xxi. 8), to David (2 S. vii. 5; Isai. xxxvii. 35), to Job (i. 8), to Eliakim (ch. xxii. 20), to Zerubbabel (Hagg. ii. 23); and several times to regenerate Israel and to Messiah in the Second Part of Isaiah (see on xli. 8). Cp. on the title of Ps. xviii.

According to the Masoretic division of the verse, which puts a stop after "barefoot" (as in *v.* 4), the second part of the verse will run: **for** *three years a sign*, &c. So Vulg. "Trium annorum signum."

This division appears correct: for—

(1) Nothing was said in *v.* 2 about the prophet's walking naked for three years.

(2) The "three years" can scarcely be included in the symbolic act; for there would be nothing in the history symbolized that corresponded to it. It is more natural to suppose that the single event,—the deportation of the Egyptians and Ethiopians,—should be portended by a *single* action.

(3) It is in accordance with xvi. 14 to suppose that the period of three years marks the limit of time, within which this prophetic act, this "sign and wonder," should be verified by the event.

(4) The one occasion, on which a man so marked by holy and dignified reserve exhibited so strange a spectacle, would remain in men's memories a "sign and a wonder;" while the frequent repetition of it would rather have tended to weaken the impression. For three years that scene,—proclaimed beforehand to represent a shameful disaster on the great Egypto-Kushic empire,—would continue to test men's characters; and then at the end would speak, as with a voice of thunder, to such as had disregarded its warning.

4. *the Egyptians...*] Or, "the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia" (cp. Nahum iii. 10, nearly *s. w.*: see below on *v.* 6).

to the shame of Egypt]—of Egypt, especially: for (as Vitringa notices, out of Herodotus) the Egyptians were accustomed to retain their usual attire even in the time of public lamentations.

5. *And they shall be* **dismayed** *and ashamed* (xxxvii. 27, *s. w.*) **because of** *Ethiopia their expectation*,—the object to which they constantly turned their eyes (Zech. ix. 5), —*and of Egypt their glory*,—of whose protection they were accustomed to boast.

6. *of this isle*] Or, "coast-land" (xxiii. 6; Jer. xlvii. 4). Compared with the gigantic empire which stretched 1500 miles into the interior of Africa, Canaan was but a small "island," or, a strip of sea-coast. How should it, then, escape being overwhelmed by the rushing deluge, which had swept up to the highlands of Ethiopia?

how shall...] Lit. *how shall we escape*, **we**?

Obs. 1. In this emphatic question we have a key to the ulterior design of all these prophecies respecting foreign nations.—If Babel and Asshur, Moab and Damascus, Egypt and Kush, with their lower degrees of light, are thus overtaken with retributive vengeance, how shall WE escape, if we neglect the wondrous opportunities of salvation that have been granted to us? (Cp. Heb. ii. 3.)

Obs. 2. We have no historical record of Sargon's success. But there are two passages, which may be taken to imply it:—

(1) Sennacherib's expression (xxxvi. 6), "this bruised reed, Egypt," looks as if Egypt had suffered some serious reverse: and what power was there then in the world, except Assyria, that could have inflicted it?

(2) Nahum (iii. 8—10) says of *No-Ammon* (that is, Thebes in Upper Egypt): "Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength;...yet was she given up to *exile*, she went *into captivity*" (nearly *s. w. a.* here in *v.* 4). If Nahum prophesied a little before Sennacherib's invasion (as is probable, see i. 11—14), it would be almost certain that the capture of No-Ammon took place in Sargon's campaign. We should also, in that case, have in Nahum iii. 8 a means of connecting the two identical expressions in ch. xix. 6 and xxxvii. 25 (*yeorey matsor*).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 1.)

In Dr Schrader's 'Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament' (pp. 254—261) is a summary of what has been supposed to be made out by Assyriologists respecting Sargon. This includes a siege of Ashdod and a campaign against Sevech, king of Egypt.

After a minute examination of some of the works of the best Assyriologists (as M. Oppert, M. Ménant, Mr Norris, and Mr Smith) the present writer is satisfied that the whole process of decipherment has not yet got beyond the *tentative* stage. In particular, as regards the names of Assyrian kings;—they have not been, properly speaking, *discovered in* the inscriptions, but rather *read into* them. They were found, because it was *assumed* that they occurred there;—"parce qu'on avait des raisons de croire qu'ils se retrouvaient dans un groupe donné." Results so obtained must undergo much patient verification, before they cease to be hypothetical. For the present, then (and probably for a long time to come), the decipherments cannot be held to furnish materials of authentic history.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *The prophet, bewailing the captivity of his people, seeth in a vision the fall of Babylon by the Medes and Persians.* 11 *Edom, scorning the prophet, is moved to repentance.* 13 *The set time of Arabia's calamity.*

THE burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through; *so* it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land.

2 A †grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

† Heb. *hard.*

CHAP. XXI. The last chapter ended with asking, "How shall *we* escape?" The *nation*, indeed, could not escape:—it was too deeply corrupted. Samaria and Judah both of them (ch. xxii) were doomed. But, for the comfort of the faithful during the approaching time of gloom, a way of ultimate escape is here pointed out. The great centre of imperial power should fall. Elam and Media, which assisted in the capture of Samaria (cp. xxii. 6), should overthrow Babylon.

The great concentration of the language, and the rapidity with which the dioramic vision moves, make it possible to take different views of some of the details in the present section. But the main drift of it is undoubted. Indeed the reference to Cyrus's capture of Babylon is so evident that some have thought it must have been written by a Jewish exile in Babylon, who had the details of Cyrus's march before him (so Gesen., Ew., Knob.).

1. *the desert of the sea*] Babylonia, with its surging masses of population, was like a "sea-desert:"—a "wilderness of peoples" (Ezek. xx. 35; cp. Jer. l. 38, li. 36; Rev. xvii. 3, 15).

Out of that desert an army of devastation is seen advancing swiftly; "*as whirlwinds in the south* (in the Negeb, or southern borderland of Palestine, xxx. 6) **sweeping along**." But, like the destructive hurricane, it disappears as soon as its work is done. (Cp. Prov. x. 25.)

it cometh] There is no need to say, *what* this is. Whatever its outer form be, it is really God's visitation (xix. 1, xxx. 27, lxiii. 1, lxvi. 15); sent to lay waste a sinful land. "Slow to anger" He is, and yet He "hath His way in the whirlwind" (Nahum i. 3; cp. Prov. i. 27; Hos. xiii. 15).

2. As the prophet is gazing on the advancing storm, the vision appears to change into a message, communicated in words.

A grievous vision] Or, *A* **hard** *vision;*—of difficult interpretation (Exod. xviii. 26); and, as regarded that part of it which could be made out, so stern (xix. 4), that heart and ear and eye laboured beneath it.

is declared unto me] Or, "reported," "announced." The revelation is presented to him as a vision full of strange sights, and accompanied by yet more surprising words. It is a drama consisting half of swift oracular sentences, half of bold symbolic pictures.

The vision represented, in quick succession, three scenes:—

1. The lawless oppressor (Asshur-Babel) carrying on his ravages.

2. Media and Persia summoned to undertake a siege.

3. The groaning bondsmen delivered.

the treacherous dealer] (xxiv. 16, xxxiii. 1). The faithless, unscrupulous, man; who sets at nought the restraints of law, or the engagements he has himself made (cp. on xxxvi. 1). LXX. ὁ ἀθετῶν. Cp. Hab. ii. 5.

the spoiler spoileth] Or, "the destroyer destroyeth." The derived noun is used in xxii. 4: "because of *the spoiling* (or, destruction) of the daughter of my people."

Elam (xi. 11)...*Media*] In xiii. 17 Media alone was named as the instrument used for Babel's overthrow. The scroll is opening gradually.

3 Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing *of it*; I was dismayed at the seeing *of it*.

4 ‖ My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he †turned into fear unto me.

5 Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, *and* anoint the shield.

6 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

‖ Or, *My mind wandered.*

† Heb. *put.*

But who is it that gives this command? That is shewn by the next clause:—*all sighing*—such as rises up to heaven from the oppressed (cp. Exod. ii. 23)—*have I made to cease* (*s. w. a.* xiii. 11, xvi. 10).

3. The prophet's emotion on receiving this "vision" was as great as if it had been "the daughter of his people" (xxii. 4), and not Babylon, that was to be attacked.

But, in truth, "the day of the Lord" would be "upon *all* that was high and lifted up" (ii. 12). Samaria was soon to fall; and what was the "sighing" (*v.* 2) heard in the "vision," but captive Judah's own (iii. 26)?

Although, then, the issue was to be the fall of Babel, yet both the tragic nature of that event itself, and, above all, the terrible desolations of Israel and Judah which were to precede it, stirred up vehement pangs of sympathetic grief and terror in the prophet's soul.

filled with pain]—*with* **sharp pain**; *s. w. a.* in Nahum ii. 11. (The only other place where it occurs is Ezek. xxx. 9.)

bowed down at...] So Vulg.—Better (with the Targ. and most moderns); *I am* **in agony so that I cannot hear**, *I am dismayed* **so that I cannot see.** (Cp. Ps. lxix. 23.)

4. *My heart panted*] Or, "is wildered;" throbbing with perplexity.

affrighted me] *s. w. a.* in Job vii. 14.

the night of...] Or, "the **twilight** of my desire;" which I rejoiced in and sought to detain by me, as a protection against the advancing "death-shadow and thick darkness" (Jer. xiii. 16, where the words "twilight," and "he hath turned," also occur).

hath he turned into fear] Or, **trembling.**—So overpowering was the vision. Cp. Dan. x. 8, 16.

Obs. It would seem as if the partial recovery of Judah (as seen especially in that great passover celebration at the beginning of Hezekiah's reign) had been to the prophet a period of refreshment and comfort,—although, indeed, the sun of national happiness was already set. He would fain have prolonged that pleasant respite. But all at once the terrible vision is presented to him;—the vision of *the careless city surprised.* Is it Babel? Yes;—but, how like Samaria! how like Jerusalem! "Rise up, ye princes! ere it be too late," is the watchman's loud cry of warning.

5. *Prepare...*] Rather, **They** *prepare the table;* **they appoint the watch; they eat; they drink** (lit. "eating; drinking;" precisely the same as in xxii. 13). All is going on merrily in the confident, self-indulgent, city:—when the watchman (or, perhaps, the prophet himself) utters the alarm:—**Rise up,** *ye princes;*—rise from off your banqueting couches (cp. xxxii. 9).

anoint the shield] In preparation for an immediate encounter with the enemy.

It was usual to oil the shield, in order that the enemy's weapon might more readily glide off it.

This description of arrogant security is remarkably applicable to Babylon; which was full of festivity on the night of its capture by Cyrus. But, if that were the lot assigned to Babylon, what other end could await the careless and luxurious cities of Israel? (Amos vi. 1—4; cp. ch. xxxii. 9—14.)

Obs. The recurrence of the words, "eating; drinking;" in xxii. 13 is very striking.—Jerusalem has become assimilated to Babel. Must not, then, the decree soon go forth, "Fallen, fallen, is Jerusalem"? Indeed, it had already been published in ch. iii. 8.

6. *For thus...*] This second part of the "hard vision" shews that there was good ground for the emotion which the prophet had exhibited. Nothing less is impending than the downfall of Babel and the entire destruction of her graven images.

set a watchman] Or, "station **the** watchman" (*s. w. a.* Micah vii. 4);—bid him stand upon his watch-tower and *look out* for the great event that is coming.

This circumstance, that Isaiah is to appoint another to look out and to listen, is remarkable. He was not himself to witness the overthrow; but he was to encourage those who came after him never to abandon their expectation of it. Already, in this vision, he is made to hear one who has received the actual tidings.

let him declare...] Rather, "what he **shall see**, let him report." Not everything that he sees; but one particular thing, of which he is forewarned in the next verse.

7 And he saw a chariot *with* a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, *and* a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

8 And ‖he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the [a] watch-tower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward ‖whole nights:

9 And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, *with a* couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, [b] Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

10 O my threshing, and the [†]corn of my floor: that which I have heard

‖Or, *cried as a lion.*
[a] Hab. 2. 1.
‖Or, *every night.*
[b] Jer. 51. 8. Rev. 14. 8. & 18. 2.
[†] Heb. *son.*

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7. *And he saw...*] Rather, *And he* **shall see**...*and he* **shall hearken.** (For the construction, cp. Ezek. xxxix. 14, 15.) As a scientific astronomer might warn an observer to look out for a comet; so the divinely-illumined prophet informs the watchman what he is to look out for.

The words rendered "a chariot," "a couple" are also used as collectives (cp. xxii. 6). But, perhaps, the singular is more in keeping with the character of the vision. The thing represented is the same in either case. The war-chariots, the cavalry moving in double file, the trains of asses and camels, correspond to the appearance of the Perso-Median army. In xxii. 6 we have Elam (the Persian part of the Assyrian army) accompanied by "chariots of men and horsemen." Cyrus had camels with him in his Lydian campaign (Herod. I. 80), and Darius used asses in his Scythian expedition (ib. IV. 129).

The command, (lit.) "he shall listen attentively," very attentively," implied that, however important the approaching event might be in its obvious bearings on the history of the world, it had a still more momentous significancy for the ear of faith (Jer. xxiii. 18, *s. w.*).

8. *he cried* (2 S. xviii. 25, 26), *A lion*] The rendering of the marg. (which is that of Aben-Ezra), "as a lion," is adopted by most moderns. Cp. Rev. x. 3.

My lord] Rather, **O Lord!**

I stand continually] Cp. lxii. 6.

whole nights] Or, **all the nights**;—every night, and all night long.

Obs. The language used by Habakkuk in ii. 1 closely resembles that of the present passage. Habakkuk was one of the succession of watchmen, who maintained that perpetual outlook on the walls of Zion. He complained of delay in the execution of the "vision" (i. 2, 3, 13); but was told that, tardy as it might seem, it was really hasting towards the end (ii. 3).

9. While he is yet lamenting his hard lot the appointed sign arrives.

a chariot of men] Or, "of a man;"—in which a man was seated. (Hebr. *ish*. In xxii. 6 it is *adam*.) Probably, as in *v.* 7, collective:—"chariots with men in them."

Obs. Both this expression, and still more that in xxii. 6 ("chariots of mankind," or "human beings"), are unusual; as if meant to excite attention. When so marvellous a work was to be accomplished,—a work far exceeding the power of man,—it might rather have been expected that "chariots of fire" (2 K. vi. 17), "chariots of salvation" (Hab. iii. 8),—some few, at least, of the "twice ten thousand chariots of God" (Ps. lxviii. 17),—should have marched in the van.

Nor was such an expectation groundless. In fact, "*the man* of God's counsel" (xlvi. 11), who executed judgment on Bel and Nebo (xlvi. 1), captured Babylon as he did, only because the Lord "went before him" and "held his right hand" (xlv. 1, 2).

And he answered] Having done as he was instructed (*v.* 7),—having "listened very attentively,"—his ears caught the sound of that terrific crash, which was to make itself heard far and wide "among the nations" (Jer. l. 46). That event supplied a complete and final answer to all the impatient questionings that had gone before.

graven images] Cp. Jer. li. 47, 52.

broken] The word used of Hezekiah's breaking down the statues which had been erected in Jerusalem, 2 K. xviii. 4;—probably, three years before this prophecy was written.

Obs. The strong antipathy of the Medes and Persians to image-worship is well known. Their iconoclasm is a thing to which the ancient world supplies no parallel outside Israel. When we try to account for it, by far the simplest explanation to be found is, that they derived their feeling from the captive Israelites. (Cp. Introd. II. § 5.). When the ten tribes were carried away to Media, what more probable than that they learnt to hate the cause of their national ruin, as the Jews in Babylonia did? The lesson was the more likely to be impressed on them from the trenchant contrast presented at that time between their own history and that of Judah. The last great national event that had preceded the captivity of the ten tribes was Hezekiah's Reformation; and scarcely twelve years had passed after their deportation to Media, when the news of Jerusalem's deliverance from Sennacherib reached them. What bitter self-reproach, what stern zeal against their own national sin, was that manifestation of divine goodness calculated to stir up

of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

11 ¶ The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.

13 ¶ The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema ‖ brought water to him that ‖ Or, bring ye.

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in the hearts of the Israelite captives! Can we wonder, if they resolved to forswear for ever the folly of idol-worship? or, if the influence of their example roused this new feeling of hostility to polytheism among the comparatively uncorrupted highland races of Iran?

10. The judgment on Babylon, now reported to Israel, was a *sifting* message.

O my threshing] My sheaves, whose grain must be separated from the chaff and stubble by heavy tribulation (xxviii. 27—29; cp. Amos ix. 8, 9). LXX. οἱ καταλελειμμένοι.

corn of...] Or, **child of my threshing-floor**:—whom I have winnowed, and shall still winnow, with my strong wind; to purge you from unrighteous admixtures (Matt. iii. 12; cp. ch. iv. 4). LXX. οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι.

of the LORD] Rather, **from** *the* LORD (lit. "from with," *s. w. a.* Ezek. xxxiii. 30).

have I declared] The vision, though mysterious in some of its parts, was by no means dark as regarded its conclusion. It assured all, who were faithful to God's covenant, that victory should eventually be with them.

11. *of Dumah*] Another mystical name; supposed by most commentators to point to Edom (LXX. τὸ ὅραμα τῆς Ἰδουμαίας); because the commencement speaks of "Seir." If this view be correct, the name may point to the connexion which subsisted between Edom's descendants and those of Ishmael; for one of the sons of Ishmael was named Dumah; and Nebaioth, Dumah's elder brother, was parent of the Nabathæans, who long held possession of Petra.

The word itself means "silence;" and is used, in an allegorical way, of "the Silent Land" of the dead in Ps. xciv. 17, cxv. 17.

He calleth] Rather, **One crieth** (xl. 3, *s. w.*). Hebr. "Unto me crieth one;" with emphasis on the "me." Even from poor Dumah, the land of spiritual silence, inquiries arose, which penetrated the prophet's ear. He divined by sympathy,—the quick sympathy of a heart which had been purified by God's grace,—what the men of Seir were asking in that gloomy crisis.

Obs. Another land of "Silence," too, was at this time, we may be quite sure, very near the prophet's heart. Samaria had no longer any prophetic voice sounding in it. Even before the Assyrian siege commenced, the darkness of night had settled upon it. After the siege had begun, would not many an Israelite turn (in thought, at least) towards the prophet in Jerusalem, to ask, "How long will it be, before the morning returns?" (Cp. on ch. xxxiv, Intr.)

Watchman] *Not* the *s. w. a.* in *v.* 6; yet denoting the same person; since it is from the same verb as the noun rendered "ward" in *v.* 8.

what of the night?] How much of it is gone? how much still remains?

12. *The morning cometh...*] Rather, **Morning hath come**, *and also* **night.** The great "day of the Lord" is dawning, full of health and joy for the faithful; but for the ungodly and earthly-minded a day of trouble, of "darkness and not light" (Amos v. 18). Cp. Ezek. vii. 7, 10.

if ye will inquire...] Or, "if ye would search, then do search: return; come." Jerome well explains it: "If ye call for My help, and are *of the stock of Abraham*, My servant, do not seek Me only in time of need, but turn to Me with your whole heart. Come, and I will receive the penitent."

The gloom settled more thickly on Edom. (Mal. i. 3; see Intr. to ch. xxxiv.) Under the Maccabees the remnant of Edom was incorporated into the Jewish nation. A short dawning of prosperity rested on them, when the Herodian family (which was Idumean) rose to power; but the upshot was to hasten on the ruin of the whole corrupted Jewish people.

The Targum paraphrases this verse: "The prophet said; There is a reward for the righteous, and there is punishment for the wicked. If ye will repent, repent ye, while there is time to repent."

13. *The burden upon* (cp. Zech. ix. 1) *Arabia*] Or, "The burden, in Arabia."

War, heavy and ruinous, had reached even the tribes that lay S.E. of Edom,—Dedan and Kedar. The Dedanites carried on the commerce between Arabia and Tyre (Ezek. xxvii. 15). Their caravans were now compelled to leave the beaten track and to seek security *in the forest*, or, thickets (cp. Jer. xlix. 8).

14. More accurately, **Bring ye water**

was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

15 For they fled ‖† from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

‖ Or, *for fear.* † Heb. *from the face.*

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail:

17 And the residue of the number of † archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken *it*.

† Heb. *bows.*

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *The prophet lamenteth the invasion of Jewry by the Persians.* 8 *He reproveth their human wisdom and worldly joy.* 15 *He prophesieth Shebna's deprivation,* 20 *and Eliakim, prefiguring the kingdom of Christ, his substitution.*

and meet him that is thirsty. The dwellers in *the land of* **Tema with their own** *bread* **did welcome the fugitives** (*s. w. a.* xvi. 3). In the first line the prophet exhorts the men of Tema to shew kindness to the Dedanites. But the admonition was not needed:—they had already gone out to proffer help, surrendering to the wanderers the bread which was meant for their own meal (cp. lviii. 7).

15. *the grievousness of war*] Or, "the pressure of battle" (cp. 1 S. xxxi. 3).

Obs. Before long, Judah would have an opportunity of imitating the true-hearted brotherly love of the men of Tema:—when fugitives out of Ephraim fled "from before the bent bow" (v. 28) of the Assyrian. Cp. on xvi. 3.

16. *of an hireling*] See on xvi. 14.

of Kedar] The most turbulent of the sons of Ishmael (cp. Ps. cxx. 5); and so representing the Arabians generally (cp. xlii. 11, lx. 7).

17. The concluding words, *the* LORD, **the** *God of Israel* (cp. *v.* 10), turn one's thoughts again towards Samaria. Ephraim, famed for his bowmen (Ps. lxxviii. 9), was to be shorn of his glory, no less certainly than Kedar was.

CHAP. XXII. Nearly all commentators, ancient and modern, understand the "Valley of Vision" to be Jerusalem. The LXX. even went so far as to render it τῆς φάραγγος Σιών.

But this seeming unanimity is only on the surface. It disappears, when we inquire to what *period* of Jerusalem's history the prophecy refers.

The majority take it to be a picture of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. But Jerome mentions his having been informed by a Jew that the prophecy related "to the times of Sennacherib;" and this view has been maintained by a large number of modern commentators.

On either supposition the difficulties are very great. Vitringa candidly tells us, that no portion of the book of Isaiah had caused him so much conflict of opinion as the first section of the present chapter. His hesitation was reasonable. For, whilst the description in *vv.* 1—7 cannot be applied, without extreme violence, to the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; yet, on the other hand, the following section (*vv.* 8—14) is plainly not suited to the circumstances of the siege by Nebuchadnezzar.

But there is another hypothesis, which is not merely free from these difficulties, but produces a striking harmony between the two apparently conflicting sections: while it also contains in it *indirectly* that reference to the siege of Jerusalem under Zedekiah, which a true instinct led almost all ancient commentators, Jewish or Christian, to attribute to it. According to this hypothesis (vaguely assumed by Grotius, advocated with much force by Mr Birks) the "Valley of Vision" is Samaria.

The reasons for adopting this view are both numerous and strong.

(1) The key-note of Isaiah's prophecies is "*Mount* Zion." Neither by him nor by any other writer is Jerusalem spoken of as a "valley" (*gey*), or as situated in a valley (Jer. xxi. 13 is no exception). But Samaria has the word twice applied to it by Isaiah (xxviii. 1, 4; cp. Micah i. 6); and it did actually stand in a valley (cp. on xxviii. 1).

(2) There is abundant reason, why Samaria should have had the name "Valley of Vision" given to it. Three of the four prophets who preceded Isaiah (Jonah, Amos, and Hosea) had spoken chiefly to the northern kingdom; and the two great wonder-working prophets, Elijah and Elisha, had belonged to it exclusively. Indeed Elisha was actually known as *the prophet that is in Samaria* (2 K. v. 2); and a large part of his official life (he survived Elijah for about 60 years) appears to have been spent in Samaria. Indeed, it would seem that, as Samaria's period of probation was to be shorter than Judah's, a larger amount of prophetic light was, during that period, allowed to be concentrated upon her.

(3) Nor must we omit to notice a remarkable verbal link, which connects the "Valley of Vision" (*gey-chizzayon*) with "the prophet of Samaria."

This title (which in any case is a mystical one) is all but identical with the name of

THE burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?

2 Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain *men are* not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.

3 All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound † by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, *which* have fled from far.

† Heb. *of the bow.*

4 Therefore said I, [a] Look away from me; [c] † I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

[a] Jer. 4. 19. [c] & 9. 1. † Heb. *I will be bitter in weeping.*

5 For *it is* a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord GOD of hosts in the valley

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Elisha's servant, Gehazi (*Gey-chazy*; rendered by Gesenius, in 'Thes.,' "*vallis visionis*"). Gehazi, who lived constantly beneath the light of prophecy and yet continued hard, covetous, and practically infidel; who gave reason to the better sort of heathen to think lightly of the claims of God's prophets, and was therefore at length smitten with leprosy; might well stand as a type of the whole people, on whom God's anathema now rested.

(4) The prophet had been surveying the surrounding nations from his watch-tower, with sympathy ready to break out for Moab and her fugitives (xv. 5, xvi. 3), for Dedan and his fugitives (xxi. 14, 15). The time was now near, when Salmaneser's troops would spread terror over Samaria;—can we think that he had no tears to spare for the "spoiling of the daughter of his people" (*v.* 4)?

(5) In all the prophecies delivered by Isaiah in Hezekiah's reign, whenever Jerusalem is described as being in imminent peril, a promise of deliverance is added. (See, for instance, xxix. 1—8.) Here, as Del. admits, we have "no single glimmer of promise penetrating."

(6) Many details of both sections are far better explained on this view (see notes):—as in *v.* 5, the "crying to the mountains:" in *v.* 8, the "covering of Judah" and "in that day." The transition, also, in *vv.* 7, 8, from Samaria to Jerusalem is, on this view, exactly parallel to that in viii. 5—8, xxviii. 1—6.

(7) Men of Kir,—a region of the Caucasus,—are mentioned as in the besieging army. It is highly improbable that this district would furnish contingents to Nebuchadnezzar's army (as it was then part of the Median empire); though it is almost certain that it would contribute to Salmaneser's. (Cp. 2 K. xvi. 9.)

Obs. 1. This appears to be a crucial test. All the points which have led commentators to apply *vv.* 1—7 to Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, are alike suited to the siege of Samaria by Salmaneser. But the converse does not hold.

Obs. 2. Nothing of practical warning to Judah is lost, on this interpretation. Samaria's end was a rehearsal of Jerusalem's. (See especially Jer. iii. 7—11.)

1. *What...*] Or, *What aileth thee*, then. (The particle is not one of *time*.)

to the housetops] In despairing grief, xv. 3. (Cp. 2 Macc. v. 12.)

2. *Thou that art...*] Or, "With crashing noises is she [now] filled,—the [once] boisterous city, &c."

tumultuous] *s. w. a.* in Prov. vii. 11, ix. 13 (of the loud, "clamorous," wanton).

joyous] Or, "exulting:"—*s. w. a.* xiii. 3, xxii. 2, xxiv. 8, xxxii. 13.

not slain with the sword]—but (Lam. iv. 9) with famine. Salmaneser besieged Samaria three years (2 K. xviii. 9, 10); no doubt, renewing the horrors, which the city had endured 171 years before (2 K. vi. 24 f.).

3. *are bound*] Or, "made prisoners." The rulers who had escaped from the city (cp. Jer. iv. 29) are pursued by the archers, and give themselves up prisoners. Those, who had fled from the towns and villages to take refuge in the capital, are taken inside it.

4. *Look away*]—that I may yield myself up to tears without restraint.

I will weep bitterly] as Micah also did (i. 8) *over Samaria's approaching fall:* and Jeremiah (iv. 19) over Jerusalem's.

labour not] Or, "press not on." Do not ply me with topics of consolation. He had no cheering message put into his mouth concerning Samaria. Hers was a fatal wound.

the spoiling] Or, "destruction" (*s. w. a.* xiii. 6).

of the daughter of my people]—the community of Israel. The same expression was employed by Jeremiah, when Samaria's fate was impending over Jerusalem, the residual heir of Israel's covenant (iv. 11; cp. Lam. ii. 11, iv. 3, 6, 10).

5. *a day of trouble*] Or, "discomfiture." It is the word used in Deut. xxviii. 20 (A.V. "vexation") of the doom that should fall on disobedient Israel. The day of doom for Samaria had now arrived.

of treading down] See on xviii. 2.

perplexity] Elsewhere only in Micah vii. 4.

by the Lord] Or, "from." Literally it would be; "For there is a day...TO the LORD"

of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains.

6 And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men *and* horsemen, and Kir † uncovered the shield.

† Heb. *made naked.*

7 And it shall come to pass, *that* † thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array ‖ at the gate.

† Heb. *the choice of thy valleys.*

‖ Or, *towards.*

8 ¶ And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest.

9 Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool.

10 And ye have numbered the

(as in ii. 12, xxxiv. 8). He *has it* by Him; and He is now producing it in all its terribleness.

in the valley of vision] where His servants, the prophets, have so long made known God's will. The day has not come without abundant warnings.

breaking down] Or, **battering down**, by the siege instruments.

crying to the mountains] The shrieks of the captured city reach to the mountains, which enclose the deep valley in which Samaria stands.

6. Elam in the S.E. and Kir in the N.W. represent the limits of the Assyrian empire;—if at least Kir be rightly identified with the country west of the Caspian Sea watered by the river Kur, or Cyrus.

chariots of men] See on *v.* 7; and cp. note on xxi. 9.

uncovered] The polished and oiled shield (xxi. 5) had usually a covering to protect it.

7. *And it shall...*] Rather, **So it is** *come to pass...***are** *full...***have** *set.*

The recurrence of the words "chariots" and "horsemen," combined with the singularity of the expression in *v.* 6, "chariots of men," or, of human beings (*adam*), cannot fail to attract the ear.

The history of Elisha supplies an easy, and an adequate, explanation.

In the chapters, which follow the history of *Gehazi*, we are told:—

(1) That, when the king of Syria "sent *horses and chariots* and a great host" to take Elisha (then at Dothan, 12 miles north of Samaria), the prophet prayed on behalf of his alarmed servant; and his eyes were opened, "and he saw, and behold the mountain was *full of horses and chariots of fire* round about Elisha" (2 K. vi. 17).

(2) That shortly afterwards, when Samaria was reduced by the Syrians to extremity of famine, it was suddenly set free in accordance with an announcement made by Elisha; "For the Lord made the host of the Syrians to hear *a noise of chariots and a noise of horsemen,* the noise of a great host," and they fled in consternation (2 K. vii. 6, 7).

These incidents occurred during the long period of grace granted to "the Valley of Vision." Now its time of probation is over. The invisible "chariots of Israel and horsemen thereof" (2 K. ii. 11, xiii. 14) have withdrawn. The Assyrian will accomplish what the Syrian could not:—for now it is a purely human contest. The vales are full of "chariots of men;" and there are no "chariots of God" sent to resist them.

Obs. Hezekiah in his address, in 2 Chro. xxxii. 7, appears to quote Elisha's words in 2 K. vi. 16.

8. *And he discovered...*] Or, *And* [thus] *he* **removed** *the* **curtain** *of Judah;*—behind which the sanctuary land of Judah (Ps. cxiv. 2) was hidden. LXX. *τὰς πύλας Ἰούδα.*

The word rendered "covering" (or, **curtain**) is used in Exod. xl. 5 of the vail of the tabernacle; in Exod. xl. 8, of the curtain at the gate of the court. (See on Exod. xxvii. 16.)

Hitherto the respect paid to the northern kingdom had guarded Judah from invasion. When Samaria had fallen, the Assyrian would no longer stand in awe, as he had done, of the southern city (cp. x. 11).

At this crisis the men of Judah looked for protection, not to God (*v.* 11, v. 12, xvii. 7), but to the Forest-House,—a part of Solomon's palace (see on 1 K. vii. 2), used as an armoury (1 K. x. 17).

Obs. With the statements in 2 K. xviii. 5, 6 and 2 Chro. xxxii. 7, 8 before us, we can scarcely suppose that Hezekiah himself placed his trust in human help. Yet one, who afterwards yielded to that fatal sin of pride (xxxix. 2), may have needed the prophetic teaching, which is contained in this chapter, to keep him safe from peril of falling. Eventually Hezekiah was able to carry out prudential measures, of the kind spoken of in the text, in entire dependence on God, 2 Chro. xxxii. 5—8.

9. *the breaches*] The word occurs elsewhere only in Amos vi. 11 (A.V. "clefts"). It is there used of the effects produced by the strokes of divine judgment.

of the city of David] the fortress Zion; 2 S. v. 7, 9, vi. 12; 2 Chro. xxxii. 5, 30.

of the lower pool] (Cp. on vii. 3.) As the intention was to collect the water inside the city, this "lower pool" could scarcely be the

houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.

11 Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

12 And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth:

13 And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: [b] let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.

[b] chap. 56. 12. Wisd. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 32.

14 And it was revealed in mine ears by the LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

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second of the two pools, that stand west of the Gihon valley (Birket-es-Sultan). It *may* have been the traditional "pool of Hezekiah," east of the Jaffa gate. Cp. 2 K. xx. 20; 2 Chro. xxxii. 3, 4, 29; (Ecclus. xlviii. 17).

10. *ye have numbered*]—to see how many could be spared.

to fortify] A strong term. It occurs elsewhere only in Jer. li. 53; where it has a condemnatory tone.

11. *a ditch*] Or, **lake**;—a larger reservoir, probably, than the "pool." The expression "between the walls" is used, in a technical way, of the lower part of the Tyropœan valley, in 2 K. xxv. 4 (see note). The "old pool," therefore, would seem to be either the "Pool of Siloam" (cp. 2 K. xxv. 4 with Neh. iii. 15), or the "Pool of the Virgin" (see on viii. 6),—fed by the "fons perennis aquæ."

unto the maker thereof...] Or, *unto* **Him that made it**...*unto Him that* **formed** *it.* The same words are used together in xxxvii. 26. (Cp. xliii. 7, xlv. 18.)

They busied themselves in storing up the water as a resource for the time of siege; but gave no thought to Him, who created the never-failing fountain.

12. *the Lord...*] Or, *the Lord,* **Jehovah** *of Hosts* (and similarly in *vv.* 14, 15); *s. w. a.* in iii. 15, x. 23.

call] by the voice of His prophets (cp. Micah i. 8, 9); and (now at last) by the judgment on Samaria.

baldness] xv. 2; Micah i. 16.

13. *slaying.....killing*] Or, "killing..... slaughtering." It looks as if the language itself were meant to express a degree of censure.

let us...] Lit. "eating; drinking:" as though these were the only things to be cared for. Jerusalem had become a miniature Babel (xxi. 5, *s. w.*).

for [say they] *to morrow we shall die*] Their words plainly mean; "We shall die, and then there is an end of us." Theirs was no ordinary case of sensual indulgence. It involved a direct *ignoring of God* (ἀγνωσία Θεοῦ, 1 Cor. xv. 34); a rejection of His providential discipline (cp. 2 Chro. xxviii. 22); a despising of their everlasting inheritance. "We are called God's children. But what do we get from our birthright (Gen. xxv. 32)? We are to weep and beat our breasts, and to be 'hewn by the prophets' (Hos. vi. 5); and soon, it seems, to share in the doom of Samaria: while Assyria carves the world out for herself as she pleases. Of all men we are the most miserable;—we die daily (Num. xvii. 13); were it not well, then, to make sure of *to-day's* mirth, at any rate? to conclude a 'covenant with death' (xxviii. 15), and to 'live, while we live'?"

Obs. St Paul, who quotes this verse in 1 Cor. xv. 32, shortly afterwards, in *v.* 54, quotes its triumphant antithesis, ch. xxv. 8.

14. *And it was...*] Or, *And the Lord of Hosts* **revealed Himself**: *s. w. a.* in 1 S. iii. 21; "the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel;"—soon after Samuel had received the message (*v.* 14); "I have sworn, that *the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged* with sacrifice nor with offering for ever." (Cp. 1 S. ii. 27, iii. 7.)

Obs. 1. The sin of Eli's sons had been the combination of an outward service of God with flagrant sensuality. "They *contemned* (*s. w. a.* Isai. v. 24) *the offering of the Lord.*"

Obs. 2. That sentence on Eli's house was virtually a doom pronounced upon the tabernacle at Shiloh:—as the sentence in the text was upon the temple of Solomon. (Cp. Jer. vii. 12.)

iniquity...purged] *s. w. a.* xxvii. 9, vi. 7.

till ye die] Taking up their ungodly speech, "we shall die" (*v.* 13). Truly, their unforgiven sin would drag them down to death. (Cp. John viii. 24.)

Obs. 1. The sentence on Eli's house was: "All the increase of thy house shall die...In one day (thy two sons) shall die both of them." (1 S. ii. 33, 34.)

Obs. 2. The following verse (1 S. ii. 35) is the key to the interpretation of the third section of this chapter (*vv.* 15—25):—"And *I will raise Me up a faithful priest*...and I will

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto Shebna, which *is* over the house, *and say*,

build him *a sure house*." For (1) *Eliakim* means "*God will raise up*" (see below); (2) the garments mentioned in *v.* 21 are those of the high-priest; and (3) the promise to Eliakim is that he shall be fixed "in a *sure* (*s. w.*) place." (See further in Note A.)

15. The continuity of the two sections, *vv.* 8—14 and 15—25, is marked by the recurrence of the solemn title, "the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts" (*vv.* 12, 14). It is obvious, therefore, that more is here spoken of than the punishment of an individual. What, in fact, is Shebna but a mystical representative of the worldly men censured in *vv.* 8—14?

Hezekiah's passover was a sudden ebullition of feeling (2 Chro. xxix. 36). Much deep-seated infidelity remained behind. It is evident from chh. xxviii and xxix that Hezekiah had as little power to cope with this, as Eli with the evil of his day. Hezekiah's reign was but a short, bright, twilight, succeeding a dark sunset (xxi. 4). The whole Davidic οἰκονομία was shaking; because the whole constitution,—royalty and priesthood—had become tainted with the Babylonian temper.

Again, therefore, as in chh. iii and iv, the prophet announces the deposition of the "unfaithful steward;" and the raising up in his place of a faithful priest and governor.

Before we consider the section in detail, it will be well to note in especial the following points:—

(1) The word translated *robe*, in *v.* 21, is used of Aaron's official robe in Exod. xxix. 5, and of that of the priests, ib. 8, xl. 14; while the word translated "girdle" is never used except of the priestly cincture. (It occurs elsewhere *only* in Exod. xxviii, xxix, xxxix; Lev. viii, xvi.)

(2) The word for "place" in *v.* 19 (a rare word) is used of the priest's office in 1 Chro. xxiii. 28; 2 Chro. xxxv. 15.

(3) The phrase rendered "which is over the house" is in the Vulgate "præpositum *templi*;" while the LXX. gives the first words of the message thus: πορεύου εἰς τὸ ταστοφόριον, "Go to the *temple-treasury*" (see 1 Chro. ix. 26, 33).

(4) The word "government" in *v.* 21 is far too lofty to be applied to any mere court-officer. Everywhere else it denotes sovereign power. In Micah iv. 8 it is used of the "old *sovereignty*" of *the Davidic line;* which, after being suspended by the Babylonish captivity, was restored by a "Governor of Israel, whose goings forth were from everlasting" (ib. v. 2).

On the whole, then, the language is markedly in favour of interpreting the section allegorically. In addition to which we may remark that

(5) When Hosea foretells the deposition of Israel from its priestly position (iv. 6, "I will reject thee that thou shalt be no priest to Me"), he says, "I will change their *glory* into *shame*" (iv. 7: *s. w. a.* in Isai. xxii. 18, 23).

(6) When Ezekiel is speaking of the rejection of Jerusalem (xv. 3, 6), he uses the figure employed in Isai. xxii. 23, 25.

(7) The word rendered "pull down" in *v.* 19 is the one used in Micah v. 11 (10) and Lam. ii. 2 of "throwing down the strongholds" of Israel. Cp. ch. xiv. 17; Jer. xlii. 10.

(8) The names are such as easily fall in with the allegorical view. For (*a*) *Sheb-na* means "sit down now" (Jer. xxxvi. 15). The verb occurs three times in the address to Babylon in ch. xlvii ("sit on the ground" &c., *vv.* 1, 5): and is also used in Jer. xiii. 18; "Say unto the king and queen, Humble yourselves, *sit down;* for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory" (cp. ch. iii. 26, *s. w.*): and (*b*), *Elyakim* means, "God will *raise up*" (*s. w. a.* Deut. xviii. 15; 1 S. ii. 35; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxx. 9; Amos ix. 11; cp. on iv. 2): while *Chilkiyah* means, "My portion is the Lord" (cp. Lam. iii. 24).

Whatever, therefore, may have been the history of the actual Shebna and Eliakim of Hezekiah's time (of which we are ignorant), the names must here be looked upon as symbolizing the two *Dispensations*.

Obs. 1. In *v.* 19 the LXX. has ἀφαιρεθήσῃ ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας σου. Cp. Luke xvi. 3, ἀφαιρεῖται τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.

The word οἰκονομία is used by the LXX. only in this chapter. In Eph. iii. 2; Col. i. 25 (cp. 1 Cor. ix. 17), it is used of the function assigned to St Paul as Apostle of the Gentiles.

Obs. 2. Vitringa, endeavouring to give a historical application to *v.* 22, is obliged to confess that he feels the words to be too weighty for the meaning he assigns to them. "Paradoxa ... comparatio," he says; and again, "Dictum ὑπερβολικῶς." Truly so;—unless the allegorical sense be, in this case, the primary one.

15. *this treasurer*] The word occurs (in the masculine) here only. As it is used contemptuously ("*this*," cp. 2 K. vi. 32), the meaning would appear to be "profit-seeker" (= ὁ θησαυρίζων ἑαυτῷ, Luke xii. 21). The verb is used in Job xxxiv. 9 (cp. xxii. 2) of the worldly temper, which complains, "*It profiteth* a man nothing, that he should delight himself with God;" supposing that *gain* is the

‖ Or, *O he.*
‖ Or, *the LORD who covered thee with an excellent covering, and clothed thee gorgeously, shall surely, &c.* * ver. 18.
† Heb. *the captivity of a man.*
‡ Heb. *large of spaces.*

16 What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, ‖ *as* he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, *and* that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?

17 Behold, ‖ the LORD will carry thee away with † a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee.

18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee *like* a ball into a ‡ large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory *shall be* the shame of thy lord's house.

19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down.

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:

21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy

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test, by which the value of all pursuits is to be tried; and that only if "godliness be gain," is it worth having. Cp. 1 Tim. vi. 5.—This temper was the radical cause of apostasy (Wisd. xiv. 2).

Obs. 1. A noun derived from the same verb is used of the *store-houses* of Pharaoh (Exod. i. 11), Solomon (1 K. ix. 19; 2 Chro. viii. 4; cp. xvi. 4), Jehoshaphat (2 Chro. xvii. 12), and Hezekiah (ib. xxxii. 28).

Obs. 2. In Job xxii. 2, xxxiv. 9 the noun rendered "man" is the unusual one which is used below in *v.* 17 ("mighty man").

unto Shebna] Lit. "upon" or "against." He was to confront him; and to deliver the message *to his face.*

There is no reason for thinking that "Shebna the scribe" (xxxvi. 3) was at any time "over the household."—It is, indeed, possible (as suggested by Del., Birks, and others) that, on being thus sternly reproved by Isaiah, he had repented and received a mitigation of his sentence. If so, it would be a remarkable instance of the *conditional* character of prophetic denunciation.

over the house] Applicable alike to either of the two houses;—the "house of the Lord," or "the king's house" (1 K. ix. 1, 10; 2 Chro. xxvi. 21).

Obs. In Heb. x. 21, ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Θεοῦ is used of the "Great Priest" of the Church.

16. *What hast thou here?*] Or, "What doest thou here?" (1 K. xix. 9, 13. Cp. ch. iii. 15, xxii. 1.) The threefold *here* is explained in the second half of the verse as meaning "here—on high, on the rock:"—as if a lofty rock-sepulchre were the summit of his earth-bounded hopes.

whom hast thou here]—in this city of David, now laid under ban? Forsaken of God, it is a poor empty place,—desolate, "without inhabitant." (Cp. Ps. lxxiii. 25.)

as he that...] Rather, the prophet turns away, and speaks *of* him: **hewing out his** *sepulchre on high,* **graving** *a habitation for himself in* **the** *rock.* As he had cared only for worldly good during his life, so what he provides against the time of death is a magnificent tomb;—his only idea of immortality being posthumous glory.

Obs. The two verbs are the same that are used in Job xix. 23, 24; where the patriarch desires that his assured hope of a resurrection of the flesh might be "*graven* in the book," "*hewn out* in the rock." That hope "full of immortality" faithless Israel had cast away. What, then, was the value of a sepulchre "in the city of David" (1 K. ii. 10; 2 Chro. xxxii. 33)? Nay, what was the worth even of the temple on the rock of Moriah? What was that better than a cenotaph?

17. *carry thee away...*] Or, "hurl thee forth far away, **O mighty man.**" (So the Syriac, Aben-Ezra, D. Kimchi, and others.) The verb is used of the ejection of Israel in Jer. xvi. 13 (cp. xxii. 26, 28).

will surely...] Or, **shall wrap thee up closely;**—as a condemned criminal, Esther vii. 8: cp. Ps. cix. 29. The LXX. has ἀφελεῖ τὴν στολήν σου (to wrap around with shame, and to strip off the robe of honour, being, in fact, much the same thing). The Targ. "confusion shall cover thee."

18. *He will surely...*] Or, "He shall bind thee full well with headband: as a ball (shall He hurl thee) into, &c." The Targ.; "He shall take away from thee thy headband." LXX. (ἀφελεῖ) τὸν στέφανόν σου τὸν ἔνδοξον.

there shalt thou die] Cp. on *v.* 14.

there the chariots...] Or, *there* **shall be thy chariots of glory,**—carried away by the enemy (cp. Mic. v. 10; ch. ii. 7)—**thou shame,** &c. So it is said of those who mind earthly things, that "their glory is in their shame" (Phil. iii. 19).

19. *drive thee*] Or, "thrust thee away."

thy state] Or, "thine office" (so A. V. 1 Chro. xxiii. 28).

20. *I will call my servant*] This is the first appearance of "the Servant of the Lord," who occupies so prominent a place in Part II. Cp. xlix. 1, 3: "The Lord *hath called me* from the womb...and said unto me, Thou art My servant." (Also, xlii. 1, 6.)

girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall [c] open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

23 And I will fasten him *as* a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.

24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the [‖] vessels of flagons.

[c] Job 12. 14. Rev. 3. 7.

[‖] Or, *instruments of viols.*

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21. *a father*] Cp. Job xxix. 16. He would provide for the wants of the people of God, as none before had been able to do. For to Abraham and Moses and David alike those words were applicable,—"Thy first father hath sinned" (xliii. 27).

Obs. After its long course of discipline Judah will confess; "Thou, O Lord, art our Father" (lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8). Cp. on ix. 6.

22. The language of this verse is manifestly figurative (as even Knobel maintains). The expression "upon his shoulder" (*s. w. a.* ix. 6, H. 5) would of itself be sufficient to shew this.

The "house of David" after the flesh was about to fall. But in Eliakim ("God will raise up") it should be built again,—and in such a way as at last to fulfil the promise, that it should *be established for ever* (2 S. vii. 25, 26). That greater house would be Palace and Temple in one; as He who administered its "government" (*v.* 21) would be also High-Priest;—"a priest upon His Throne" (Zech. vi. 13).

The Targ. has; "I will place the key of the house of the sanctuary [cp. 1 Chro. ix. 27], and the government of the house of David, in his hand."

he shall open...] Ahaz had closed the gates of the temple (2 Chro. xxviii. 24, xxix. 7). But, when "He that is holy, He that is true" (Rev. iii. 7), opened the kingdom of heaven "to all believers," none should be able to close them. The gates of "the house of God," the catholic Church, stand "open day and night" (cp. lx. 11).

he shall shut...] He shall close the Davidic dispensation (cp. Jer. xiii. 19), and then that entrance is closed for ever (cp. Ezek. xliv. 2). He shall "shut up the high ones that are on high in prison" (ch. xxiv. 22); and none, save Himself (who alone "has the keys of Hades and of death," Rev. i. 18), can liberate them.

23. *as a nail*] This is referred to, probably, both in Zech. x. 4, and in Ezra ix. 7, 8. ("For our iniquities have we, *our kings and our priests*, been delivered into the hands of the kings of the lands;...and now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, *and to give us a nail in His holy place*, that our God may lighten our eyes and give us a little reviving in our bondage.")

The word is generally used of the "tent-pin" (xxxiii. 20, liv. 2), which secured the tent. In *v.* 25, however, as in Ezek. xv. 3, it seems to denote a nail or peg in a wall.

Here, as elsewhere, the very incompatibility of the successive figures forces on one's attention the necessity of admitting an allegorical sense.—He, whose firmness is represented under the figure of "a nail in a sure place," is next *a throne of glory* (*s. w. a.* in Jer. xiv. 21, xvii. 12, "*A throne of glory*, on high from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary"). Cp. Note A.

to his father's house] See on iii. 6; and Note A. Cp. Luke i. 32, 33.

24. *all the glory...*] The glorious promises made to David (the accomplishment of which in their first, literal, sense had been frustrated by the sins of David himself and of Solomon and their descendants) shall be suspended upon him. *Men*, indeed, have turned the glory of the Davidic covenant into shame (cp. Ps. iv. 2); and the house of David has fallen. But He whom "God will raise up" shall "build the temple of the Lord, and *He shall bear the glory*" (Zech. vi. 13); having first borne "the shame" (Heb. xii. 2).

The name *I-chabod* was now written upon the Temple of Solomon, as clearly as it had once been upon the Tent at Shiloh. But a second house should be built, whose "glory should be greater than that of the former house" (Hagg. ii. 9): because under it the "Lord of glory" (1 Cor. ii. 8) would establish a better covenant. For He would "*bear the iniquities* of all" (liii. 6, 11).

the offspring (lxi. 9, *s. w.*) *and the issue*] The words seem to denote "a numerous, undistinguished, family connexion" (Del.); who are spoken of as "vessels" made to be used in that "great house" (2 Tim. ii. 20). All, even those of smallest size, should hang upon Him;—even the *cups* (Exod. xxiv. 6, *s. w.*), and *flagons*, or earthen **pitchers** (Lam. iv. 2; ch. xxx. 14, *s. w.*).

Obs. In 2 Chro. xxxvi. 18 we are told that "all the vessels of the house of God,

25 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that *was* upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

the great and the small," were "brought to Babylon." That was the "casting out of Shebna" into the wide land of Babylonia.—But they were rescued by Cyrus and sent back to Jerusalem (Ezra i. 7, 8, v. 14, 15, vi. 5); at the time when God gave them that "nail in His holy place" (Ezra ix. 8), which was to be a preparation for the enthroning of Eliakim.

25. *In that day*] This sometimes introduces an unexpected contrast (cp. iv. 1, xix. 18, xxviii. 5). Here the contrast is so strong that many are disposed to refer *v.* 25 to Shebna. The language, however, most plainly shews that it is Eliakim, of whom this strange reverse is foretold. The verse is, doubtless, an enigma; but its *verbal* sense is unambiguous.

The Targ. gives here a simple and truthful paraphrase of the text.

"At that time, saith the Lord of Hosts, there shall be removed the faithful chief governor, who ministered in a firm place, and he shall be cut off, and shall fall."

"A throne of glory;" yet "cut off, and falling"! Truly, this does appear inconsistent.

But not more so, than when it is said in two consecutive passages:

(1) "Behold *My servant* shall...be exalted and extolled and be very high" (lii. 13).

(2) "He was cut off out of the land of the living...He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sins of many" (liii. 8, 11).

The *polarities* of magnetism are profoundly mysterious; but they are not *inconsistent*:—no more are those contrasted sides of the divine action in the work of redemption. For what else, indeed, was "Immanuel" born, but that He might be *the servant of the Lord*, who, by the suffering of death, should bring in everlasting life?

Verse 25 contains, in germ, what was revealed to Daniel;—that the "holy of holies should be anointed," and "Messiah the prince" come; but that He should be "cut off," and "the city and the sanctuary be destroyed" (Dan. ix. 24, 26).

the nail that is fastened in the sure place] The heir of David's throne was *removed* and *cut down*, and *fell*. The Jews "destroyed that temple" of His body (John ii. 19, 21); and thereby brought their whole "house" to desolation (Matt. xxiii. 38). When Christ expired, the Temple veil was rent. Then the whole dispensation came virtually to an end. Then "the burden that was" upon Him "was cut off,"—all that heavy burden of ignominy, which He endured, when they *crucified the Lord of glory* (1 Cor. ii. 8); and the name, Eliakim, had its fulfilment in His resurrection and glorification. Then were "the *sure* mercies of David" established (lv. 3; Acts xiii. 34).

Obs. 1. He who says, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore; *amen;* and have the keys of Hades and death" (Rev. i. 17, 18), appeared in vision, "clothed with a ποδήρη," and "girt about the breasts with a golden girdle;"—that is, as High-Priest.

Obs. 2. The word for "be removed" is the same that is used in liv. 10, lix. 21; Jer. xxxi. 36; where the new, immoveable, covenant is spoken of. The "cutting off" of Messiah was in order to bring in "everlasting righteousness." The departure of the risen Saviour was in order to establish "a kingdom that cannot be moved."

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 14.)

The reference to 1 S. ii and iii is confirmed by the following verbal parallelisms:

(1) The expression "throne of glory" in *v.* 23, found also in Jer. xiv. 21, xvii. 12, occurs besides *only* in 1 S. ii. 8.

(2) The "father's house" of *vv.* 23, 24, occurs in 1 S. ii. 28, 30, 31.

(3) The גדע ("cut down") of *v.* 25 is used in 1 S. ii. 31.

(4) Shebna has here the term קלון בית אדניך applied to him (*v.* 18). In 1 S. ii. 30, iii. 13, Eli's house is to become vile (יקלו), because his sons had acted vilely (מקללים).

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 The miserable overthrow of Tyre. 17 Their unhappy return.

THE burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

2 Be †still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, *is* her revenue; and she is a mart of nations.

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, *even* the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, *nor* bring up virgins.

5 As at the report concerning Egypt, *so* shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.

†Heb. *silent.*

CHAP. XXIII. Of all foreign races none, probably, exercised so powerful an influence on Israel as the Phœnician. Small as the strip of land was, which it occupied, it had sent out colonies to every part of the Mediterranean, and was the centre of the commerce of the old world. Its wealthy, enterprising, cities, of which Tyre, the successor of "the great Sidon" (Josh. xix. 28), was now the chief, seemed to supply the very ideal of worldly prosperity. Their temple of Melkarth was reputed to be the most ancient of all with which Greeks were acquainted. Their goddess Ashtoreth was worshipped with rites, which pretended to throw the sanction of religion over the utmost excesses of licentiousness.

Here was a perpetual temptation to the double-minded men in Israel.

How poor comparatively were "the Lord's people" compared with those, who owned allegiance to the Queen of the seas! How gloomy the restraints of the Sinaitic law compared with the gay and joyous freedom of the crowds that frequented the merchant city!

This danger was brought closer to Israel, first by the apostasy of Solomon who married Sidonian wives, and built a high place in front of Jerusalem "for Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Sidonians" (2 K. xxiii. 13); and afterwards by Ahab's marrying Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal king of Sidon, and introducing the worship of Baal (=Melkarth) into Israel;—whence it spread into the southern kingdom (2 K. xi. 18).

But now, in this day of visitation, the pride of Tyre also must be laid low. As to the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy, various opinions have been held. Josephus, 'Ant.' IX. 14, mentions that Salmaneser besieged Tyre for five years:—but with what result, is not stated. Nebuchadnezzar, we are told, besieged it for thirteen years (cp. Ezek. xxix. 18—20). The period of seventy years—the duration of Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty—mentioned in *v.* 15, favours the view that the Babylonian siege is referred to.

1. *ye ships of Tarshish*] (ii. 16). The LXX. here has, "ships of Carthage" (cp. Humboldt's 'Kosmos,' II. 167, 415). But Tarshish is more probably Tartessus in Spain,—identified by some with Malaga, by others with Cadiz. For (1) the word *tarshish* in Exod. xxviii. 20 (A.V. beryl) is rendered by the LXX. "chrysolite" or topaz; which is still found in Spain. And (2) Josephus says that he examined a document in the temple at Tyre, which placed the founding of Carthage 143 years 8 months after the building of Solomon's temple; that is in 861 B.C. But we know that there were "ships of Tarshish" already in Solomon's time. Cp. Note B on 1 K. x.

Howl...for it is laid waste] The ships appear to be homeward bound. As they touch at Kittim, or Cyprus (also called *Kition*), the strange event is revealed to them. Tyre is desolated; there is now "no home" to welcome them back.

no entering in] *s. w. a.* in xxiv. 10.

2. *Be still*] Or (as in marg.), **Be silent**;—with awe and dismay.

of the isle] The rock-island of Tyre. Or, "of the sea-coast," Phœnicia.

3. Tyre, herself without agriculture, was yet a granary, from which the "sowings of the Sichor" (the Dark River), *the harvest of the* **Nile**, were distributed over the neighbouring lands.

she is a mart] So Aben-Ezra. Others, "and it became the merchandise (*v.* 18) of nations."

4. Sidon, the aged mother of Phœnicia, is to be ashamed; because Tyre, the pride of her empire, is ruined.

even the strength] Rather, *the* **stronghold**;—the great fortress that guarded the world's maritime commerce.

I travail not...] Or, **I have not travailed**, *nor* **brought forth**, *neither* **have I nourished**...*nor* **brought up** (*s. w. a.* i. 2). After all her pains and care, she is left childless. The family which she had reared and advanced to high dignity, has perished.

5. *As at the report...*] So the Targ.,

6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.

7 *Is* this your joyous *city*, whose antiquity *is* of ancient days? her own
† Heb. *from afar off.* feet shall carry her †afar off to sojourn.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning *city*, whose merchants *are* princes, whose traffickers *are* the honourable of the earth?

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed
† Heb. *to pollute.* it, †to stain the pride of all glory, *and* to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: *there is* no more †strength.
† Heb. *girdle.*

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment ‖against †the merchant *city*, to destroy the †strong holds thereof.
‖ Or, *concerning a merchantman.* † Heb. *Canaam.* ‖ Or, *strengths.*

12 And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass

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Rashi, &c.; taking the reference to be to the consternation which followed the news of Pharaoh's destruction, Exod. xv. 14; "peoples heard; they were afraid: pangs (*s. w.*) laid hold on the inhabitants of Philistia." Others (LXX, Vulg. &c.): "When the report reaches Egypt, men shall be in pangs at such a report of Tyre:"—because, if the impregnable sea-fortress has fallen, Egypt's hour of trial cannot be far off.

6. *to Tarshish*] When Tyre was besieged at a later period by Alexander, the Tyrians did actually escape to Carthage. As yet, Tarshish was the place of higher fame.

7. *your joyous* (city)] *s. w. a.* xxii. 2.

whose antiquity] The Tyrian priests in Herodotus's time (Herod. II. 44) asserted that their temple had been built 2300 years previously.

her own feet shall carry her...] Other nations were *carried away* captive (Hos. x. 6, *s. w.*); not so Tyre. She was borne away to her distant places of exile by her own fleets. The Targ. paraphrases: "In olden time they brought her gifts from a distant land: behold, now she is carried away to sojourn."

8. *Who hath taken this counsel*] Or, **purposed** *this* (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 9: cp. xiv. 24—27; xix. 12).

the crowning (city)] that gave away crowns; disposing of kingdoms in Spain and elsewhere (cp. Jer. xxv. 22). So the Targ., Del., Knob., &c.—Others, "*the crowned* (city)" (Vulg. "coronata"); that sat on her island-throne, "glittering in gold and gems, in silk and purple, as a queen among the nations" (Jer.). Even at Carthage the priest of Melkarth wore a gold crown and a robe of purple. (P. Smith, 'A. H.,' II. 386.)

whose traffickers] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 11: Hebr. *Kena'an.* Sidon was the eldest son of Canaan (Gen. x. 15); and so "Canaan" came to be used for "trader." (Hos. xii. 7; Zeph. i. 11).

9. *to stain*] Or, **to profane** (*s. w. a.* xliii. 28);—so as to shew the vanity of the efforts they made to deify themselves.

glory...contempt] *s. w. a.* xxii. 18:—ix. 1 (H. viii. 23).

10. *Pass through...*] Or, "Pass over thy land, **as the Nile**;"—whose waters rise up suddenly and flood the land, and then disappear into the sea. So now let loose thy population to rush, without order or control, towards the sea. Targ. "Pass from thy land."

O daughter of Tarshish] The community is nowhere in this chapter called "daughter of Tyre." In *v.* 12 its former subjection to Sidon is pointed to by the title "daughter of Sidon;" now in its exiled condition it is "daughter of Tarshish." Either the ancestral city or the distant colony must give it its name.

no more strength] Or, *no more* **a girdle.** Her fortifications, which had been as a cincture of strength and beauty around her, are no longer inviolate:—and the yet stronger bands of traditional self-respect and patriotic pride have been dissolved. (Cp. Job xii. 21, nearly *s. w.*)

11. *He stretched*] Or, **He hath stretched.** This humiliation of Tyre was the effect of God's out-stretched hand (xiv. 26); smiting *the sea*, as well as the dry land (Hagg. ii. 6).

he shook] Or, **He hath shaken.** Asshur or Babylon was the instrument (xiv. 16); but the action was God's. Cp. Ps. xlvi. 8.

against the merchant city] Or, **concerning Canaan**;—the trading land (*v.* 8), Phœnicia.

12. *O thou oppressed virgin*] Or, "thou outraged **virgin-daughter**" (xxxvii. 22, xlvii. 1; Jer. xiv. 17, xlvi. 11; Lam. i. 15, ii. 13).

Obs. Here, as in xlvii. 1 and Jer. xlvi. 11, the expression was doubtless meant to alarm the ear of the "daughter of Zion" (which is indeed the reading—obviously an error—of several MSS. and of the Alex. LXX.).

over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, *till* the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; *and* he brought it to ruin.

14 Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

15 And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the

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shalt thou have no rest] No rest in Cyprus;—to which Nebuchadnezzar's power, it seems (Jer. xxv. 22), would reach. No, nor yet in the western Mediterranean. Carthage was compelled to maintain the commerce of her Phœnician colonies by warfare; and at last the sentence "Delenda est" was executed upon her, leaving the city in ruins. After a hundred years (B.C. 146—46) a Roman city was built on the site; of which Gibbon wrote; "The ruins of Carthage have perished." A few fragments of them have been recently discovered:—but we are told, that the ruins "of the Punic city are to be sought beneath the surface of the soil" (P. Smith, 'A. H.' p. 373).

13. The end of this concluding burden reverts to the burden on Babylon;—in order to warn men against thinking it incredible that Tyre should be thus laid waste.

Obs. The key to the interpretation of *v.* 13 is supplied by xxv. 2, where the words of its last clause are re-echoed;—"Thou hast *made* ...a fenced city *a ruin*." The word rendered "ruin" occurs *only* in Isai. xxiii. 13 and xxv. 2: cp. xvii. 1. (Nearly the same word is used of fallen Assyria in Ezek. xxxi. 13, 16.) It is derived from the verb used in xxi. 9, "Fallen, fallen is Babel."

the land of the Chaldeans] Babylon; Jer. l. 1; Ezek. xii. 13. Cp. ch. xiii. 19, xlvii. 1, 5.

this people was not] Rather, **is not**:—has ceased to be; *s. w. a.* in xv. 6; Job vi. 21; Ezek. xxi. 32 (=27). In the latter passage it is rendered in A.V., "shall be no more." Cp. Obad. 16. (So Piscator: "Desiit esse populus.")

Obs. Babylon had said "I am, and none beside me" (xlvii. 10). Now she has been blotted out of existence.

the Assyrian...] Or, **Asshur** *founded it* **for the beasts of the desert** (*s. w. a.* xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14); to become their possession. That was to be the issue of Assyria's magnificent projects.

they set up...] Or, *they* **raised up her watch-towers** (which had gone to decay), *they* **awakened** *her palaces* (out of the slumber of ages).

The two verbs are used in parallelism in Ps. vii. 6 ("arise...awake"). Cp. Ps. xliv. 23, 26. In Isai. li. 17, lii. 1, 2, they are used of Zion's "awaking" and "arising" out of her desolation.

This appears to represent what the later Assyrian dynasty actually did for Babylon in the eighth century before Christ. (Cp. Herod. I. 184—7.)

and he brought it to ruin] Or, **He made it a ruin**.—Verse 11 shews, *who* is spoken of. (Cp. xxi. 4.)

14. *your strength*] Or, *your* **stronghold**; *v.* 4.

That Tyre capitulated to Nebuchadnezzar at the end of its 13 years' siege, is not expressly stated; but is very generally admitted. Josephus ('c. Ap.' I. 20) tells us (out of Phœnician documents) that "Nebuchadnezzar conquered all Syria and Phœnicia." When Cyrus took Babylon, the Phœnicians at once submitted to him (Herod. III. 19); as if they had been a satrapy of the empire. (Cp. Dr Pusey, 'On Daniel,' p. 288.)

But how greatly Tyre had been impoverished during the siege, is evident from Ezek. xxix. 17, 18: where Nebuchadnezzar is promised the conquest of Egypt to reward him for so unprofitable a labour as the reduction of Tyre had been.

15. *shall be forgotten*] It is not said, in ruins:—but without the attractions which had gained her so much attention. (Cp. Jer. xxx. 14.)

according to the days of one king] That is, in prophetic style (cp. Dan. ii. 38), of one dynasty. Nabopolassar founded the Neo-Babylonian empire in 606 B.C. (Del.). It was overthrown by Cyrus in 536 B.C.

Obs. 1. Jeremiah, who predicted that the Jewish captivity in Babylon would last 70 years (xxix. 10), also foretold that *all the nations round about* should "serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (xxv. 9, 11). But from xxvii. 6, 7, it is plain that "*the king*" included Nebuchadnezzar's son and son's son.

Obs. 2. The synchronism between the periods of the Jewish captivity and the subjugation of the nations is striking. It would seem as if it were meant to impress the Gentiles with a sense of there being a real bond of connexion between them and that outwardly insignificant people.

In regard to Tyre in particular;—it is observable, that as its pre-eminence dated from the time, when it helped to build the temple of Solomon;—for, "Hiram raised his country to a position of power and independence

days of one king: after the end of seventy years † shall Tyre sing as an harlot.

† Heb. *it shall be unto Tyre as the song of an harlot.*

16 Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

17 ¶ And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

18 And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD:

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which it had not previously enjoyed" (A. S. Wilkins, 'Phœn. and Isr.' p. 65);—so at the beginning of the renewed prosperity, which it had under the Persians, we find "them of Sidon and Tyre...bringing cedar-trees from Lebanon" for the building of the second temple. (Ezra iii. 7.)

Obs. 3. It is scarcely possible to dissociate the advice given in *v.* 16 from thoughts of Zion herself; who in i. 21 had the term "harlot" applied to her. The remainder of the chapter has, plainly, an *undertone* of allegory running through it.

shall Tyre sing...] Lit. "shall there be to Tyre as the song of a harlot;"—whose "feet abide not in her house" (Prov. vii. 11). Tyre will again go forth, and endeavour to win the nations to admire the gaiety and splendour of her wares;—professing to be their benefactress, while seeking her own gain.

16. If Tyre would, indeed, be remembered,—and not consigned to perpetual oblivion,—let her hear the advice of God's prophet:—

Take an harp];—his, let it be, of whom thy good king "Hiram was ever a lover" (1 K. v. 1).

go about the city] (Ps. xlviii. 12);—the city of Him, "the great King," who once with His strong wind "brake in pieces the ships of Tarshish" (ib. *vv.* 2, 7).

thou harlot that hast been forgotten] so long forgotten,—and so deservedly; for thy fame was all "of the earth, earthy," and had in it no elements of immortality (Eccles. ii. 16).

make sweet melody] (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxiii. 3);—such as befits the upright, whose transgression is forgiven (xxxiii. 1, xxxii. 1).

sing many songs]—the songs of Zion, now no longer oppressed by Babel (Ps. cxxxvii. 3).

that thou mayest be remembered]—even "with the favour the Lord bears to His people" (Ps. cvi. 4).

This last passage *Remember me...oh visit me* links *v.* 16 on to the following, which says:—

17. *the LORD will visit Tyre*] The very promise given by Jeremiah to the captive Jews in Babylon; "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon *I will visit you*" (xxix. 10: cp. xxvii. 22).

The Targ. paraphrases; "Tyre *shall be remembered* before the Lord."—Her name had already been inscribed in His Book of Record (Ps. lxxxvii. 4). She, as well as Judah, shall be "visited" in mercy. Both shall have a new period of probation granted them.

to her hire]—the wealth, which followed on foreign commerce (*s. w. a.* in Deut. xxiii. 18).

and shall commit...] Or, "shall play the harlot." See on *v.* 15. LXX. καὶ ἔσται ἐμπόριον πάσαις ταῖς βασιλείαις.

18. *her hire* (*v.* 17) *shall be holiness*] Or, holy; LXX. ἅγιον. This shews plainly (what the preceding verse implied), that these verses are allegorical. For "the hire of a harlot" was not to be "brought into the house of the Lord," being "an abomination" (Deut. xxiii. 18). Cp. Ps. xlv. 12.

Obs. 1. Commerce has, in many ways, prepared for the extension of the catholic Church. Even in Apostolic times it helped St Paul and his fellow-labourers to move rapidly to distant cities. In modern times, amidst all the sins that have gathered around it, commerce has been the chief agent in adding the "New World" to Christendom, and in opening the way for missionary labour among the heathen nations of Asia and Africa. When we consider the fertility of the tropical regions,—one fiftieth part of which (it is said) would, under proper cultivation, supply food and clothing for the whole existing population of the world (Dr Mac Ivor, 'Rel. Progr.' p. cxxxi);—we may well think that we are as yet only beginning to realize the influence which commerce is capable of exercising on the physical, political, and moral progress of our race.

Obs. 2. Tyre, as representing commerce, is in marked contrast with Babylon, which represents conquest. Commercial nations have, indeed, been frequently led astray into imperial projects; but, so far as they have surrendered themselves to the spirit of conquest, they have suffered for it. In its own nature, commerce tends to bind the nations of the world together in amity. Its bonds, indeed, are those of self-interest; and therefore, when severed from Christian philanthropy, such amity is only a poor, sordid, or even corrupting, thing;—is but a semblance of true international charity, as harlotry of matrimony. Yet the "woman that was a sinner" may be

it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for † durable clothing.

† Heb. *old.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *The doleful judgments of God upon the land.*
13 *A remnant shall joyfully praise him.* 16 *God in his judgments shall advance his kingdom.*

BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and † turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

† Heb. *perverteth the face thereof.*

2 And it shall be, as with the

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converted, and minister to the Holy One in His kingdom.

Obs. 3. The first church founded by St Paul in Europe is inseparably associated in our thought, as with manufactures and commerce (Acts xvi. 13, 14) on the one hand; so on the other, with genuine hospitality (Acts xvi. 15) and true-hearted bounty (Phil. iv. 10—18).

it shall not be treasured nor laid (stored) *up*]—in treasuries and storehouses which Babylon can rifle; xxxix. 6; Jer. xx. 5.

Obs. The words rendered "treasure" and "store" both of them occur (as nouns) in Jer. xx. 5: as they do also in ch. xxxiii. 6; where, after mention of the "spoiler's" ravages, mention is made of the incorruptible riches.

that dwell before the LORD] In His Church (Ps. xxvii. 4, lxxxiv. 4).

to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing] The two chief aims, as of human industry in general, so of legitimate commerce.

Obs. The two last clauses embody the constituents of that "godliness with contentment," which is "*great gain*," 1 Tim. vi. 6—8; (1) "dwelling before the Lord," εὐσέβεια: (2) sufficiency of "food and clothing," αὐτάρκεια: while the first clause corresponds to *vv.* 18, 19, of the same chapter; "to do good, to be rich in good works,...laying up in store for themselves (ἀποθησαυρίζοντες ἑαυτοῖς) a good foundation against the time to come."

CHAPS. XXIV—XXVII. We now emerge out of the prophecies relating to the typical forms of national life into others of a broader character, which concern the world at large. The deluge of divine justice has come forth over the world. The central people, Israel, first, and then all the surrounding nations, have been laid low. The silence of death reigns. Yet songs arise from the uttermost part of the earth (xxiv. 16); and "after many days" the King of glory returns to reign in Zion (xxiv. 23), to "destroy the veil that was spread over all nations," and "swallow up death for ever" (xxv. 8); so that they, who dwelt in the dust, awake, arise, and live (xxvi. 19). Israel is recovered, and her restoration is as life from the dead to the nations. She "blossoms and buds and fills the face of the world with fruit" (xxvii. 6).

A deep elegiac tone prevails in ch. xxiv. But many parts of chh. xxv—xxvii sound as if they were the very songs of the righteous spoken of in xxiv. 16. Two portions of them, indeed, are expressly styled "songs;" xxvi. 1—4, xxvii. 2—5.

CHAP. XXIV. Before entering upon the chapter, there is a preliminary question which ought to be first noticed. The word, ERETS, occurs in ch. xxiv sixteen times. It is generally rendered "earth;" but in three places (*vv.* 3, 11, 13) "land." Much of the language (in *vv.* 1—12) favours the use of the word "land:" yet the occurrence of "world" in *v.* 4, of "ground" (*adamah*) in *v.* 21, of "in the midst of the peoples" (cp. Micah v. 7) in *v.* 13, appears to lean the other way. But a comparison of Hos. iv. 3, 6, 9 decidedly confirms the first impression.

The truth appears to be this. The land of Israel was a miniature of the world. Its recovery from the moral pollution of the idolatrous races was a historical prelude of a like recovery of our earth. Its temple-congregation was a type of the Church Universal: its visible king of the "King of all the earth." In Israel was the germ of restoration for the human race, of blessing for all nations. Consequently, if Israel's light was eclipsed, the whole world was darkened. If Israel languished under a curse, the "everlasting covenant" appeared to be annulled, or, at least, suspended.

But now, to the prophet's eye, the elect nation was thus forsaken (ii. 6). Possibly, at this very time the Assyrian army was gathering towards Samaria. The little band of faithful men, who remained in Jerusalem, though they might obtain a *respite* for Judah, could not do more than that. The *land* of Israel was doomed to desolation. Then the whole *earth* became "waste and void" (cp. Jer. iv. 22, 23).

1. *maketh...empty ... maketh it waste*] The two verbs occur together in Nahum ii. 10 (11), of Nineveh. The second of the two occurs *only* here and in Nahum.

turneth it upside down] Lit. "overturneth its face:"—*s. w. a.* in Ezek. xxi. 27 (32) of the overturning of Israel's royalty.

scattereth] The word that is used of Israel's being scattered among the nations: Deut. iv. 27, xxviii. 64, xxx. 3. Cp. Gen. xi. 4.

people, so with the [a] priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

4 The earth mourneth *and* fadeth away, the world languisheth *and* fadeth away, [†] the haughty people of the earth do languish.

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

8 The mirth [b] of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

11 *There is* a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

12 In the city is left desolation,

[1] Or, *prince.*
[a] Hos. 4. 9.
[†] Heb. *the height of the people.*
[b] Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11.

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2. *people...priest*] So of Israel, in Hos. iv. 9 (in *contrast* with Judah, *v.* 15).

3. *The land*] The people and the land had been associated for weal or for woe, Lev. xxvi. 4, 19.

spoiled] *s. w. a.* in x. 6 (*baz*).

4. *mourneth*] So of captive Judah, iii. 26. So of Israel, Hos. iv. 3.

fadeth away] Or, "withereth;" *s. w. a.* xxviii. 4, xl. 8.

the haughty people...] Or, "the high ones (*v.* 21, *s. w.*) of the people of the earth."

5. *is defiled*] Or, "desecrated" (*s. w. a.* Num. xxxv. 33; Jer. iii. 1, 2, 9). "Therefore they must be driven out, as Cain was driven out of Eden." (Knob.)

the laws] The plural is used in Levit. xxvi. 46, Ps. cv. 45, Dan. ix. 10, of the various provisions of the Law.

the ordinance] Or, "statute." This is a term which could scarcely have any application to other nations than Israel; as it refers to matters of positive institution,—especially, to the passover (Exod. xii. 24; cp. 14, 17, 24). Ahaz had gone so far as to close the temple (2 Chro. xxviii. 24).

broken the everlasting covenant] Especially by idolatry (Deut. xxxi. 16—20; Jer. xi. 10); and by neglect of the great safeguard against polytheism, the sabbath-day (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17).

6. *the curse*]—"written in the Book" of the Covenant (Deut. xxix. 12, 20). Cp. Jer. xxiii. 10; Ezek. xvi. 59.

are desolate] Rather, **bear their guilt**; or, are made to pay the penalty due to their sin. (Hos. x. 2, xiii. 16, = H. xiv. 1.)

7. *The new wine*] Or, "The vintage;" here, probably, the fruit. Cp. Joel i. 10, 12.

8. *tabrets*] *s. w. a.* in v. 12.

them that rejoice] Or, "the joyous ones;" the revellers:—*s. w. a.* xxii. 2, xxiii. 7. Cp. v. 14.

the joy of] Or, *the* **mirth** *of*; *s. w. a.* in the first clause.

ceaseth] LXX. *πέπαυται.*

9. The Hebrew appears to mean: "In their song they drink no wine;" as though it were a sad, dirge-like, song (see the title to Ps. lxxxviii), a fit accompaniment to the "cup of trembling" (li. 22):—"bitter shall strong drink be to them that drink it;" for the only strong drink to be had then will be spiced with tears and "the cruel venom of asps" (Deut. xxxii. 33).

10. *The city of confusion* (Hebr. TOHU)] which, having set at nought divine law and order, had fallen back into a state of chaos (cp. xxxiv. 11, lix. 4, *s. w.*).

shut up] Firmly barred and bolted against the return of the now homeless wanderers (Jer. xiii. 19). Cp. xxiii. 1.

11. *a crying for wine*] Strictly,—"a wailing on account of wine;" that is, because none can be had. Cp. Jer. xiv. 2, *s. w.*

is darkened] Lit. "has become evening." The sun of joy has set: and a long night of gloom is at hand. Cp. xxi. 4.

is gone] Lit. "has gone into captivity." (v. 13; 1 S. iv. 21, 22, *s. w.*)

12. *is left desolation*] Or, "what is left (xvii. 6) in the city is desolate."

and the gate is smitten with destruction.

13 ¶ When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, *there shall be* as the shaking of an olive tree, *and* as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the ‖ fires, *even* the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

16 ¶ From the † uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, † My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

17 [c] Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

18 And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

19 The earth is utterly broken

‖ Or, *valleys.*

† Heb. *wing.*

† Heb. *Leanness to me,* or, *My secret to me.*

[c] Jer. 48. 43, 44.

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the gate] once the protection of the city, *is smitten* **down** (Ezek. xxxiii. 21) **into ruin.**

13. As *v.* 14 implies that we have a topic of consolation here introduced, the rendering given by A. V. seems on the whole the best (cp. 1 K. viii. 37). Others: "For so shall it be...as."

the land...the people] Rather, *the* **earth...** *the* **peoples.**

14. *They...*] Or, **These** *shall lift up their voice, they shall* **shout: because** *of the majesty of the Lord, they* **cry aloud.** The words for "shout" and "cry aloud" are the same that were used of Zion in xii. 6.—The comparatively small bodies of men, who raise their anthems of praise along the shores of the Mediterranean, are the true Zion.

Obs. It was chiefly in lands bordering on the Mediterranean that the first Christian churches rose.

15. *glorify ye*] Cp. xxv. 3.

in the fires] In the fiery trials to which you will be subjected (*s. w. a.* xxxi. 9). Cp. 1 Pet. iv. 12—16. Or, "in the light;" that is, the bright light of divine revelation (*urim*): cp. the Targum: "When light shall come to the righteous." They are to reflect the Divine Light, so that men may glorify God. (Cp. Matt. v. 14, 16; Phil. ii. 15, 16.)

the name of the LORD] Now revealed in mercy and judgment (xii. 4, xxv. 1, xxvi. 8, 13).

isles of the sea] xi. 11.

16. In response to the prophetic call, songs are heard from the furthest "corner" of the earth.

even glory to the righteous] The songs speak of the glory reserved for "the righteous" (a collective, as in xxvi. 7); nay, already bestowed upon them through Him, who is as "a crown of glory" (xxviii. 5; cp. iv. 2, *s. w.*) to His people. Or, "Glory be to the Righteous One!" (Knob., Del.)

But I said] Or, "Then said I;" as in vi. 5. In both cases, the prophet views himself as the representative of forsaken Israel. He before heard the seraphim proclaiming that "God's glory filled the whole earth;" now he hears the songs of the righteous ascending from the ends of the world. "Woe is me," is the exclamation uttered here, as there, at the thought of his own lot.

My leanness] Lit. "leanness (or, wasting sickness) is unto me." While the distant nations are feeding on the "feast of fat things" (xxv. 6), Israel is famishing.

the treacherous dealers] (xxi. 2, xxxiii. 1). Kimchi takes these to be the four successive world-empires,—Babylonian, Median, Greek, Roman.

17. *Fear...*] (Jer. xlviii. 43, 44). The figure is that of an animal fleeing in terror from the huntsman, but taken in a pitfall, or a trap (LXX. παγίς: cp. Luke xxi. 35).

are upon thee] *s. w. a.* Judg. xvi. 9, "the Philistines be *upon* thee."

O inhabitant of the earth] A collective (see xxvi. 9, 18). Ye who have made earth your home (cp. on xxii. 15, 16).

18. *taken*] *s. w. a.* viii. 15, xxviii. 13. Cp. Amos v. 19.

the windows...] As of old, when the cloud-torrents poured down upon the corrupt earth (Gen. vii. 11, *s. w.*).

the foundations...] as when the fountains of the great deep were broken up (Gen. vii. 11; cp. Ps. xviii. 7).

19. The figure seems to be taken from a house shaken by an earthquake. It is rent

down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall † punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

† Heb. *visit upon.*

22 And they shall be gathered together, † *as* prisoners are gathered in the ‖ pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be ‖ visited.

† Heb. *with the gathering of prisoners.*

‖ Or, *dungeon.*

‖ Or, *found wanting.*

23 Then the [d] moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and ‖ before his ancients gloriously.

[d] chap. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Joel 2. 31. & 3. 15.

‖ Or, there shall be *glory before his ancients.*

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *The prophet praiseth God, for his judgments, 6 for his saving benefits, 9 and for his victorious salvation.*

O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy

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and fractured; it bursts open in fissures; its basement gives way. Then (*v.* 20), it totters, sways rapidly to and fro, and falls.

20. *be removed like a cottage*] Or, "sway to and fro like a garden-hut (*s. w. a.* i. 8 'lodge')."

be heavy] Cp. Ps. xxxviii. 4.

21. *shall punish*] Or, "hold visitation upon;" *s. w. a.* xxvii. 1, 3; cp. xxvi. 21.

the host of the high ones] Lit. "of the height." As these are contrasted with earthly kings, the beings referred to can only be angelic:—"the world-rulers of the darkness of this present age" (Eph. vi. 12); the "spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places" (*ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, equivalent to the expression "on high" here. Cp. Ps. lxviii. 18, *s. w.*).

22. *gathered together*] Swept away in one mass.

in the pit] LXX. *δεσμωτήριον* (cp. Exod. xii. 29).—It is the word used of Hades in xiv. 15, xxxviii. 18.

in the prison] *s. w. a.* xlii. 7.

be visited]—and brought forth from prison;—whether for a new period of probation (xxiii. 17; cp. Jer. xxvii. 22; Rev. xx. 7), or to receive their final sentence, whatever that be.

23. *shall be confounded*] Or, "grow pale;"—in the presence of that incomparable brightness (lx. 19; Rev. xxi. 23).

shall reign] Exod. xv. 18. (Cp. on xxv. 1.)

in mount Zion] (Micah iv. 7). Then the decree recorded in Ps. ii. 6—8 will have its completion.

gloriously] Or, in glory:—the glory being the visible accompaniment of His Presence. The "ancients" seem to occupy a position similar to that of the "elders" (*s. w.*) in Exod. xxiv. 1, 9, 14; who "saw the God of Israel," when "the glory of the Lord abode on Mount Sinai." Cp. Ps. cii. 15—22.

CHAP. XXV. In xxiv. 16, the prophet had heard songs of joy rising from the ends of the earth, while Israel was pining away in sorrow. Now Zion has been restored; and she too can lift up her voice in praise.

The cause of rejoicing appears to be the downfall of the "city of confusion" (xxiv. 10). By its overthrow God had wrought a deliverance for His distressed people, which recalled the wonders of the Exodus (see on *v.* 1).

If we ask, what this city is, the answer is supplied by a comparison of xxvi. 1 with xxvi. 5; where "the lofty city" is in contrast with the city whose walls are "salvation." As the latter is the ideal Zion (lx. 18), the former must be the ideal world-city. All actual embodiments of the worldly principle, — Samaria, Jerusalem, or Babylon, — must, no doubt, share in the humiliation; but their history does not exhaust the meaning of the prophecy. The work here spoken of is one that must go on advancing until "death is swallowed up for ever" (*v.* 8).

Obs. 1. It is remarkable that the Targ. took *v.* 2 as referring to Jerusalem: "the idolatrous house of the nations *in the city of Jerusalem* shall never be built up again." On the other hand, the humiliation of "the terrible ones" (*vv.* 3, 4, 5) seems to point to Assyria (xiii. 11, *s. w.*); whilst the "rain and storm" of *v.* 4 (cp. xxviii. 2) and the rich oils and wines of *v.* 6 (cp. xxviii. 1, 4) rather turn our thoughts to Samaria.

Obs. 2. It is to be noted that nineteen of the terms used in this chapter occur *twice;* and two others *three times:* see Note A.

1. *my God; I will exalt*] Cp. Exod. xv. 2; where "my God" is followed by "I will exalt Him" (*s. w.*).

Obs. 1. The paschal psalm, cxviii, combines Isai. xxv. 1 with Exod. xv. 2; "Thou art my God (ELI, Exod. xv. 2), and I will praise Thee (Isai. xxv. 1); my God (ELOHAY,

name; for thou hast done wonderful *things; thy* counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.

2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; *of* a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.

3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall.

5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; *even* the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

6 ¶ And in this mountain shall

Isai. xxv. 1), and I will exalt Thee" (Exod. and Isai.). (Ps. cxviii. 28.)

Obs. 2. Verses 19, 20 of the same psalm look back, probably, to Isai. xxvi. 2; and *v.* 24 to Isai. xxv. 9.

Obs. 3. The quotation from Exod. xv. 2 in ch. xii. 2 is also found in Ps. cxviii. 14.

hast done wonderful things] Or, **wonders**; —another reference to the Exodus. hymn (Exod. xv. 11; cp. Ps. lxxvii. 14, lxxxviii. 10, lxxxix. 5).

Obs. 1. In Ps. lxxxviii, death appears to have won an irreversible victory: for—Can Almighty Power be expected to "shew wonders to the dead"? Ps. lxxxix replies, that "the heavens shall praise His wonders," actually completed.

Obs. 2. The word rendered "wonders" is the same that occurs in ix. 6. There it is followed by "Counsellor;" here by "counsels." (Cp. xxviii. 29.)

(thy) *counsels*...] Or (taking the clause as continuative of the preceding), *counsels of old,* **in** *faithfulness and truth.* Beneficent purposes, which had been revealed in remote antiquity, but had seemed to be utterly frustrated, are now most faithfully made good. The mighty oppressor has been vanquished, and the oppressed liberated (cp. xiv. 24—27, xix. 12—17, xxiii. 8), by the King, whose name is "Faithful and True" (Rev. xix. 11).

of old] Lit. "from afar;" *s. w. a.* xxii. 11, xxxvii. 26, xlvi. 10; Jer. xxxi. 3.

2. *an heap*] A pile of stones or of rubbish (xxxvii. 26).

a defenced city] Or, "fenced citadel" (*s. w. a.* i. 21, 26, xxii. 2, xxiv. 10, xxix. 1).

a ruin] A mass of ruins, xvii. 1, xxiii. 13.

a palace of strangers] The word for "palace" is used in 1 K. xvi. 18 and 2 K. xv. 25 (the only places in the historical books where it occurs), of the tower that guarded the residence of the kings of Israel. In ch. xxxii. 14, Jer. xxx. 18, the tower seems to belong to Jerusalem. In either case, it had become "a fortress of strangers;" since its defence had been entrusted to "strange gods" (see on i. 7, xxix. 5).

So should it be with Babylon; literal or mystical.

3. Then "the strong people," and the mightiest of nations, should acknowledge God's power and justice;—as Cyrus in particular did (Ezra i. 2—4).

the city (or, citadel) *of the terrible nations*] The "terrible" ones, here and in *vv.* 4, 5, are those, who had vast power, and were wont to use it without restraint (*s. w. a.* xiii. 11, xxix. 5, xlix. 25). In xxix. 5 the LXX. has τῶν καταδυναστευόντων σε: in xiii. 11, ὑπερηφάνων: in Ps. xxxvii. 35, ὑπερυψούμενος.

4. *a strength*] Or, **stronghold** (xvii. 10)

the poor...the needy] *s. w. a.* Ps. lxxii. 13 Cp. ch. xiv. 30, xxix. 19.

from the storm] Properly, "rain-storm" (iv. 6, xxxii. 2, *s. w.*).

when the blast...] Or, "for the blast of the terrible is as a rain-storm against a wall (*s. w. a.* xxii. 5);"—driving fiercely against the wall of a fortress.

The wall of the city of pride fell beneath that violent blast. (Cp. xxviii. 2.) But the "poor and needy" were safe within the city, whose walls were "salvation" (xxvi. 1, xiv. 32).

Obs. The same word for "wall" is used in the highly allegorical passage, Ezek. xiii. 12, 14, 15; where the figure of a tempest beating against a fortress-wall is expanded. (Cp. Matt. vii. 25, 27.)

a shadow from the heat] *s. w. a.* iv. 6.

5. The meaning of the verse is better brought out by retaining the order of the Hebrew. *As the heat in* **a parched land**, *the noise* (xxiv. 8, *s. w.*) *of strangers shalt thou* **subdue**;—(as) *heat with the shadow of a cloud, the* **chant** *of the terrible ones shall be brought low.* Under the oppression of their proud enemies Israel had withered away: had become like ground burnt up by the scorching rays of a tropical sun. But God could relieve His people as speedily as when a thick cloud floating across the sky cools the atmosphere.

The word for **chant** (A.V. branch) occurs elsewhere only in Song of Sol. ii. 12. (Cp. ch. xxiv. 16, nearly *s. w.*)

the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will † destroy in this mountain the face of the covering † cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.

† Heb. *swallow up.*
† Heb. *covered.*

8 He will [a] swallow up death in

[a] 1 Cor. 15. 54.

Obs. 1. The word for "parched land" (*tsayon*) occurs only here and in xxxii. 2. In both places the LXX. has Σιών.—There need be little doubt that Sion was *referred to.* The refreshing dews of divine blessing, the fertilizing clouds of spiritual grace, had been long withheld from it (v. 6). The atmosphere had been filled with the sirocco blasts of idolatry.—Now, when God interposed His protecting presence (as at the Exodus), the tyrants would be brought low.

Obs. 2. In xxxii. 2 it is "a MAN," that shall be "a refuge *from the rain-storm,*" and "*as the shadow* of a great rock in a weary land."

6. At the end of ch. xxiv the prophet had spoken of a time, when "the Lord of Hosts" should "reign on Mount Zion" in glory. He now adds, that "on this mountain," which must still be Zion, "the Lord of Hosts" would "*make for all* **peoples** (*v.* 7) a feast" of richest viands. Cp. Ps. xxii. 26.

of fat things] Lit. "of oils;"—referring, probably, to the fragrant unguents, which were used at feasts (Amos vi. 6; Song of Sol. i. 3, iv. 10; cp. ch. xxviii. 1, 4:—the *only* places where the plural occurs). The LXX. has χρίσονται μύρον at the beginning of *v.* 7. —In that case we must render, in the next clause, "oils well purified."

of wines on the lees well refined] Combining strength with clearness:—old wines, but carefully strained.

At Sinai the seventy elders, who accompanied Moses a certain distance up the ascent, "saw God, and did eat and drink." Afterwards, all Israel was invited to come up three times a year to Jerusalem, to hold festival and to "rejoice before the Lord." These sacred feasts were types of the great banquet, to which *all nations* should hereafter be called (cp. lv. 1, 2),—the banquet held in celebration of the victory which was gained over Death and Hades by the Son of God Incarnate.

7. *he will destroy*] Or, "swallow up;" so as to cause it entirely to disappear: *s. w. a.* in *v.* 8: iii. 12, xix. 3. Symm. καταποντιεῖ: cp. Exod. xv. 12; Num. xvi. 30, 32, 34; Jonah i. 17.

the face of the covering] (Hebr. LOT). The whole world is overlaid with a covering which hides away its original destiny;—the covering of mortality, superinduced by those wiles of the tempter which prevailed against man. But this "covering" shall not always continue. "Corruption" is a "bondage," from which the creation shall be delivered (Rom. viii. 21). It does not belong to the proper nature of man; it lies only on the surface. It is a temporary curse, spread over our race like a mantle (1 Cor. xv. 54; 2 Cor. v. 4). That mournful, unnatural, "surface-covering" (for such is nearly the effect of the words, cp. Job xli. 5, A.V. 13) shall at length be "swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. v. 4).

The Hebrew word *lot* occurs only here (and in the proper name, Lot). A cognate verb, *laät*, is used of David's "covering" his face, when he mourned for Absalom: 2 S. xix. 5 (4).

Obs. A closely allied noun, *lahat*, is used of the clandestine arts, by which the Egyptian wise men changed their rods into serpents. At that time, the rod-serpent of Aaron "swallowed up" those of the magicians. In like manner should all the deadly machinations of the enemy of mankind be "swallowed up."

and the vail] A difficult word, which occurs three times, with varying applications, in chh. xxix, xxx (see xxix. 20, xxx. 1, 22: cp. xxix. 10). It appears in all cases to denote what is spread (or, poured) around an object with the view of concealing its poverty, nakedness, or deformity.

Here it would seem to refer to the delusive splendour with which imagination invests sensuous objects;—the gilding that hides away the intrinsic worthlessness of the world's idols;—the glitter that prevents men from seeing the wretchedness of sin. The day of God's visitation will sweep away these unrealities, and awake mankind out of their slumbers to the perception of eternal truth.

8. The prophet hastens forward to that great consummation:—*He* **hath swallowed** *up death* **for ever** (*s. w. a.* xxxiv. 10). "For ever" is the almost uniform rendering of the phrase in A. V.; and so the Vulg. has here, "in sempiternum." The primitive meaning of the noun, however, seems to be "brightness" or "lustre;" which easily passes into the notion of triumphant strength or decisive victory (cp. 1 Chro. xxix. 11; 1 S. xv. 29);—perpetuity of possession following upon this.

The rendering in 1 Cor. xv. 54 is the same as Theodotion's; κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος. Aq. has, καταποντίσει τὸν θ. εἰς νῖκος. Symm. καταποθῆναι ποιήσει τὸν θ. εἰς τέλος.

Obs. After the general resurrection and the judgment "Death and Hades" are to be "cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 14).

victory; and the Lord GOD will
[b] Rev. 7. 17. & 21. 4. [b] wipe away tears from off all faces;
and the rebuke of his people shall he
take away from off all the earth: for
the LORD hath spoken *it*.

9 ¶ And it shall be said in that
day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have
waited for him, and he will save us:
this *is* the LORD; we have waited for
him, we will be glad and rejoice in
his salvation.

10 For in this mountain shall the
hand of the LORD rest, and Moab
shall be ‖ trodden down under him, ‖ Or, *threshed.*
even as straw is ‖ trodden down for ‖ Or, *threshed in Madmenah.*
the dunghill.

11 And he shall spread forth his
hands in the midst of them, as he

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the Lord GOD] Hebr. "the Lord Jehovah" (as in vii. 7).

tears] Cp. xxx. 19, xxxviii. 3, 5 (Rev. vii. 17, xxi. 4).

the rebuke of his people] The taunts they had to endure from the worldly; who counted their patience of faith to be folly, and their hope of salvation to be a dream. (Cp. xxxvii. 23, 24; Ps. lxxiv. 10, lxxxix. 51; Zeph. ii. 8, 10.)

the LORD hath spoken] i. 2, xxii. 25.

9. *we have waited for him, and...*] Cp. Prov. xx. 22.—The prophet had engaged (as head of the faithful Church) thus to "wait" for the Lord (viii. 17). Cp. xxvi. 8, xxxiii. 2. (Heb. ix. 28.)

we will be glad and rejoice in...] *s. w. a.* in Ps. cxviii. 24 (part of the "Paschal Halleluyah"), and Song of Sol. i. 4 (which was read during the passover). Not elsewhere.

10—12. After the glory of the redemption of Zion follows the degradation of her remaining enemies; who are here symbolized by *Moab*. Among the reasons why this name may have been chosen the following deserve consideration.

(1) Moab had sought to bring a curse on Israel by the help of Balaam's sorceries: and although these were ineffectual, yet the artifice suggested by Balaam, of seducing Israel by means of the licentious rites of Peor, did bring a heavy chastisement upon the people.

Moab stood at the entrance of Canaan to prevent Israel, if possible, from entering upon its inheritance. It acted the very part of serpent's seed.

(2) The mountains of Moab rise up on the further side of the Dead Sea; as if in rivalry to those of Judah, from which they are separated by the Dead Sea (called by the Arabs, "The Sea of LOT"). Between Moab and Zion "a great gulf is fixed;" like that which divine judgment interposed between Lot and Abraham.

(3) Moab, the child of *Lot* (cp. *v.* 7)—the offspring of a dark deed of incest which was perpetrated beneath a veil of unconsciousness superinduced by intoxication,—stands as the mystical representative of the corrupted and sensual world.

Obs. If the literal Jerusalem had become enslaved to Moabitish sin, then, undoubtedly, it must share in the doom here proclaimed against Moab.

10. *shall the hand of the LORD rest*]—to perform "His *whole* work" (x. 12): punishing Jerusalem for her sin (xl. 2, li. 17), yet glorifying His people (xli. 20; cp. 1 K. xviii. 46; Ezek. i. 3).

Moab shall be trodden down] Lit. "threshed" (xxviii. 28, xli. 15; cp. xxi. 10).

under him] Or, "in its own place;"—hurled into ruin as the wall of Jericho was, when it "fell down *in its own place*" (*s. w.*), Josh. vi. 20; awe-stricken as Egypt was, when "none moved from *his own place*" (*s. w.*), Exod. x. 23.

for the dunghill] Rather, **in the water of a dung-pit** (Hebr. *madmenah;* as if with reference to the city, *Madmén*, Jer. xlviii. 2). Cp. Jer. viii. 2, xxv. 33. It is observable that the only place outside the Pentateuch, in which "the children of Lot" are mentioned, is Ps. lxxxiii. 8: where they appear as the leaders of a vast confederacy against God's "hidden ones" (*vv.* 3—8). The sentence, which is there prayed for, is that they may become "as the dung of the earth" (*v.* 10).

11. The subject of the first, no less than of the second, principal verb is, "the Lord." (So Aben-Ezra.) The Targ. has: "He shall extend the stroke of his power among them, as the swimmer extends himself to swim."

in the midst of them] Or, "of him,"—Moab. So in Exod. iii. 20: "I will stretch out My hand, and smite Egypt with all My wonders, which I will perform *in the midst thereof*." (Cp. Num. xiv. 11; Josh. xxiv. 5.)

The figure here employed is remarkable. The "spreading of hands" has reference elsewhere to prayer (i. 15; Ps. cxliii. 6), entreaty (lxv. 2), or agonizing lamentation (Jer. iv. 31; cp. Lam. i. 17). Can it be conceived then that any victory was ever gained by a Divine Person over the arch-enemy,—over death and sin,—in which the conqueror "spread out His hands," as "one that swimmeth" amidst deep waters, or, as one who prays, entreats, or suffers agony, might "spread forth his hands"? What Christian can hesitate for an answer?

that swimmeth spreadeth forth *his hands* to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

12 And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, *and* bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

It was while Jesus "stretched forth His hands" (cp. John xxi. 18) on the cross, that He "triumphed" over principalities and powers (Col. ii. 14, 15). Those outstretched hands had power incomparably greater than those of Moses at Rephidim (Exod. xvii. 12, 13).

he shall bring down their pride] Or, **lay low his haughtiness** (*s. w. a.* xiii. 11). Cp. xxvi. 5 (*s. w.*).

together with the spoils of their hands] Or, **the artifices**,—the spells of sorcery (cp. on *v.* 7), or tricks of legerdemain, or wily machinations, by which he deluded the nations. Cp. the cognate noun in Jer. ix. 7, A. V. 8; Hos. vii. 6.

12. The prophet now turns and addresses the city of pride (Babylon, is it? or Samaria? or Jerusalem? or the world-city?) which must be overthrown in order that the city of God (xxvi. 1) may be built:—"The towering fortifications *of thy walls*." Already in Deut. xxviii. 52 the voice of warning had said: "He shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until *thy high and fenced walls* come down." Cp. Jer. lii. 14.

For the antithesis see xlix. 16, lx. 10, 18, lxii. 6.

shall he bring down...] Lit. **hath he bowed down, laid low, brought down to earth, even to the dust** (cp. xxvi. 5).

NOTE A.

(1) The following terms occur in this chapter twice:—

"Strangers" (*vv.* 2, 5), "stronghold" (*v.* 4), "city" (עיר, *v.* 3), "citadel" (קריה, *vv.* 2, 3), "rain-storm" (*v.* 4), "heat" (*vv.* 4, 5), "shadow" (*vv.* 4, 5), "feast" (*v.* 6), "all the peoples" (*vv.* 6, 7), "fat things" (*v.* 6), "wines on the lees" (*v.* 6), "swallow up" (*vv.* 7, 8), "we have waited for Him" (*v.* 9), "the veil" (הלוט, *v.* 7), "trodden down" (*v.* 10), "his hands" (*v.* 11), "spread forth" (*v.* 11), "swim" (*v.* 11), "lay low" (*vv.* 11, 12).

(2) And these occur each *three times*:—"The terrible" (*vv.* 3, 4, 5), "in this mountain" (*vv.* 6, 7, 10).

(3) In addition to the above, note also אמונה אמן (*v.* 1); ישועתו and ישועתנו (*v.* 9); and אלהינו אלהי.

The effect of these recurrent sounds upon the rhythm of the verses is striking: especially in *v.* 6; of which Delitzsch says: "The ring of the verse is inimitably expressive. It is like joyful music to the heavenly feast. It is as if we heard stringed instruments played with the most rapid movement of the bow."

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *A song inciting to confidence in God,* 5 *for his judgments,* 12 *and for his favour to his people.* 20 *An exhortation to wait on God.*

IN that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will *God* appoint *for* walls and bulwarks.

CHAP. XXVI. It is evident that the city spoken of in *v.* 1 can only be the Jerusalem which belongs to the period of "the restitution of all things;" the glorious city of ch. lx.

Yet the purpose of the prophetic revelation was strictly practical; for the comfort and admonition of the existing generation. In every age the true Church must have the character of patient faith and upright obedience which is described in this chapter. Accordingly we may trace a correspondency between the behaviour of Hezekiah under the Assyrian troubles and that of the Church as set forth in *vv.* 13, 16 (cp. xxxvii. 14—20, xxxviii. 2, 3); while Hezekiah's language in xxxvii. 3 seems almost to have been borrowed from *vv.* 17, 18. Cp. also *v.* 3 with 2 Chro. xxxii. 8.

1. *a strong city*] Lit. "a city of *strength*" (*s. w. a.* Ps. xlvi. 1).

will God appoint] Rather, "will He appoint:"—the agent being one whom there was no need to mention. It was He who had been spoken of in xxv. 8, 9.

God would establish "salvation"—His own saving might—as *walls and* **rampart**; to replace the perishable fortifications which were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (Lam. ii. 8).

Cp. lx. 18—22.

2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the
† Heb. truths. † truth may enter in.
3 Thou wilt keep *him* in † perfect
† Heb. peace, peace. peace, *whose* ‖ mind *is* stayed *on thee:*
‖ Or, thought, or, imagination. because he trusteth in thee.
4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever:
† Heb. the rock of ages. for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* † everlasting strength:
5 ¶ For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* to the ground; he bringeth it *even* to the dust.
6 The foot shall tread it down, *even* the feet of the poor, *and* the steps of the needy.
7 The way of the just *is* uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.
8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul *is* to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

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2. The city was *already* peopled;—for it was the city on the mount of the Lord, spoken of in Ps. xxiv, whose gates were opened at the approach of the King of Glory. Its warders are now bidden to *open the gates* for the admission of fresh citizens, the new-created Israel;—*the righteous nation*, gathered in from the ends of the earth (xxiv. 16); "that keepeth **truth**," or, fidelity; maintaining loyalty of faith toward God.

In Ps. cxviii. 19, 20 (which is founded, probably, on this passage of Isaiah) the gates are "gates of righteousness;" and they who enter them are "the righteous." Similarly in ch. lx. 21 the people of Zion are "all righteous." The parallelism with Ps. xxiv will be clearer, if we render literally; "and the righteous nation...*shall come in*" (*s. w.*). The King of Glory entered first; His people follow.

3. *Thou wilt keep*] Or, "guard" (Ps. xxxi. 24); like the φρουρήσει (A. V. "keep") of Phil. iv. 7. If they maintain their fidelity, He assuredly will not be wanting on His part.

in perfect peace] Lit. "peace, peace" (*s. w. a.* in lvii. 19).

whose mind is stayed on thee] Or, **the steadfast** *mind.*—The word here rendered *mind* means, properly (*s. w. a.* Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21; Deut. xxxi. 21; 1 Chro. xxviii. 9, xxix. 18), the *imagination;* which is so apt to trust to its own plans, and to be carried to and fro on the changing currents of hope, desire, and fear.—The word for "stayed" (or "steadfast") occurs *elsewhere only* in Ps. cxi. 8, cxii. 8 ("his heart *is established;* he shall not fear").

because he trusteth] Or, **it.** The form (which occurs *elsewhere only* in Ps. cxii. 7) implies entire *repose* of faith; such as leads a man to cast away human anxiety (cp. Phil. iv. 6).

4. *Trust ye...*] So twice in Ps. cxv. 10, 11 (a Paschal psalm).

in the LORD *JEHOVAH* (xii. 2) *is everlasting strength*] Lit. "is the Rock of ages." The idiomatic "*in Him* is the Rock," resembles our way of speaking, "*in Him* we have a sure protector."

For the application of the title "Rock" to God, cp. xvii. 10, xxx. 29; Deut. xxxii. 4, 15.

5. According to the accents, the verse is divided thus: *For He* **hath bowed down** (xxv. 12) *them that dwelt on high* (cp. xxiv. 21), *the lofty citadel; He layeth it low, layeth it low even to* **earth.** Cp. xxv. 12.

6. *shall tread it down*] The sentence on Samaria, xxviii. 3; on Jerusalem, xxviii. 18. Cp. v. 5.

the poor]—who had been trampled upon in the proud city (iii. 14, 15).

7. *The way of the just* (or, righteous, *s. w. a.* in *v.* 2) *is uprightness*] or, straightness. He walks, in intention, along the straight way of truth; and God makes it to be, in spite of its roughnesses, a straight way to the land of peace.

Obs. The connexion of this with *v.* 3 is given in Prov. iii. 5, 6; "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart... and He shall direct (or, make straight) thy paths." (Cp. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24; Prov. xi. 6.)

thou, most upright...] Or, **O upright One, Thou** *weighest...* The term "upright" is applied to God in Deut. xxxii. 4; Ps. xcii. 15 (in both places, in combination with the title "Rock"). He "weighs" (or "ponders," *s. w. a.* in Prov. iv. 26, v. 21) the path, with a view to keeping it straight and level. None, therefore, need turn aside from that well-constructed road into "crooked ways" (Ps. cxxv. 5) of their own devising. Cp. Ps. xvii. 3—5.

8. The prophet and his disciples had walked thus in God's ways:—yea, had *waited* for Him (xxv. 9) *in the way of* His *judgments:* receiving with lowly submission and patience what His justice decreed to Israel and to the nations; assured that all these deeds of severity were supremely good.

the desire of our soul...] Lit. "For Thy Name ...there is *desire of soul*,"—a longing which penetrates *the very soul;* as if it were a passion or an appetite (Ps. xlii. 1).

the remembrance of thee] Or, "Thy memorial." The word is used in parallelism

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

10 Let favour be shewed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

11 LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy ‖ at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

‖ Or, *towards thy people.*

12 ¶ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works ‖ in us.

‖ Or, *for us.*

13 O LORD our God, *other* lords beside thee have had dominion over us: *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

14 *They are* dead, they shall not live; *they are* deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited

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with "name" in Exod. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxv. 13. (Cp. Hos. xii. 5.)

Their desire was for the manifestation of God's character;—the character which was connoted by His *Name*, and which was handed down in the historical *memorial* of His deeds of power and love.

9. Through the long, dark, night of affliction (xxi. 11) that earnest "soul-longing" continued: yea, the inmost spirit concentrated its strength on the work of looking out for the light of God's presence.

will I seek thee early] Or, "I will earnestly expect Thee:"—as one, who is anxiously looking out for the return of morning-light (cp. viii. 20):—*s. w. a.* Ps. lxiii. 1; Hos. v. 15. The reason why the prophet so anxiously desired that God's *judgments*, ordinarily "far above out of the sight" of the wicked (Ps. x. 5), should be displayed **on** *the earth*—is now assigned. It was because experience had shewn that this was the only way of effecting a real reformation.

will learn] Lit. **have learned.** This has been the case in time past;—much more will it be so in that final "revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. ii. 5).

10. *Let favour...*] Or, **Let a wicked man have mercy granted.** It will only do him harm. He will "despise the goodness and forbearance" shewn him (Rom. ii. 4). Mercy appears to him a sign of weakness. Nothing but stern severity will disabuse him of his errors.

in the land of uprightness] Or, "rectitude" (lit. "right things;" *s. w. a.* xxx. 10). Even in the Holy Land,—beneath the light of the law, the priesthood, the Davidic covenant, prophecy,—the strange perverseness of fallen humanity was exhibited from one age to another.

will he deal unjustly] Or, "wrongfully" (*s. w. a.* Ps. lxxi. 3).

will not behold] Or, "consider" (as in v. 12, *s. w.*). A due consideration of God's transcendent excellence would banish pride and its attendant sins from the world.

11. *when thy hand...*] Or, "high is Thy hand (cp. Exod. xiv. 8; Ps. lxxxix. 13), but they see not." They close their eyes against the plainest proofs of God's providential government of the world.

see, and be ashamed] Ps. lxxxvi. 17; Micah vii. 16.

for their envy at (or, "of," Eccles. iv. 4) *the people*]—God's people (cp. xxx. 19). Envy of the privileges conferred by God on His people could arise only (as in the case of Ephraim, xi. 13) from infidelity.

the fire of thine enemies...] The flame of cruel, passionate, ambition shall be their own destruction.

12. In spite of those poor jealousies and envyings, the Church is sure that He, who had wrought so wondrously for Israel in time past, had "thoughts of peace" (Jer. xxix. 11) towards them.

for thou also...in us] Lit. "for even all our work hast Thou wrought **for us**" (the word being the same as in the first clause). Cp. Ps. lxviii. 28; Num. xxiii. 23.

13. *other lords*]—the idol-lords of the nations, to whose service they had addicted themselves. The Assyrian or Babylonian oppressors were but visible exponents of the tyranny of those cruel "lords many." How will they ever be able to throw off this yoke? The answer is: "Only through Thee (cp. Ps. lvi. 10) **shall** we make mention of Thy Name" (Ps. xx. 7, *s. w.*). His gracious interposition alone could enable them again to use the name "O Lord, *our God.*"

14. *They are dead...*] Or, "Dead, they shall not live; long dead (Hebr. *rephaim*, Ps. lxxxviii. 10), they shall not rise." Those idol-lords die, to have no resurrection (cp. xxvii. 9).

therefore...] Or, "to this end **didst thou hold visitation,** *and* **destroy** *them, and*

and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far *unto* all the ends of the earth.

16 LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a † prayer *when* thy chastening *was* upon them.

† Heb. *secret speech.*

17 Like as a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

19 Thy dead *men* shall live, *to-*

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make" &c. Cp. Jer. x. 11; Lam. iii. 66; Ps. ix. 6.

Obs. To the eye of faithless sorrow it might appear as if the same destruction, that had swept away these idols, had overtaken Israel. Had not God now "visited" them (Exod. xxxiv. 34)? Had He not "destroyed" them (Deut. iv. 26, vii. 4, xxviii. 20, 24, 45, 48, 51, 61, 63; Josh. xxiii. 15)? Did it not seem as if He would "make their remembrance to cease from among men" (Deut. xxxii. 26)? Was not Israel scattered over the earth, a vast mass of dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14)? Could "those dry bones live"? Would God "shew wonders among the dead"? Could "the long-dead rise up again, and praise" Him (Ps. lxxxviii. 10)? The answer is supplied in *v.* 19, "Thy dead shall live." For Israel was not "smitten according to the stroke of those that smote him" (xxvii. 7).

15. *Thou hast increased the nation*] Lit. *Thou hast* **added to** *the nation.* The LXX. supplies "evils" (*κακὰ*, as in xv. 9; Ps. cxx. 3). Similarly Aben-Ezra, "Thou hast continued, hast yet more chastised." The "chastisement" of *v.* 16 strongly favours this: see Lev. xxvi. 18 (cp. 21).

thou art glorified] Or, **hast gotten Thee glory**; as in the overthrow of Pharaoh, Exod. xiv. 4, 17, 18; and in the punishment of Tyre, Ezek. xxviii. 22. (Cp. Lev. x. 3.)—His "glorious and awful Name" (Deut. xxviii. 58) had been manifested in judgment.

thou hadst removed...] Or, "Thou hast removed it far away (*s. w. a.* vi. 12) unto all the ends of the earth" (*s. w. a.* Ps. xlviii. 10, lxv. 5 *only*). Cp. xliii. 6; Deut. xxviii. 64.

16. *have they visited thee*] Or, **they remembered** *Thee* (1 S. xv. 2). Cp. Deut. iv. 30; Hos. v. 15 (immediately before the promise of national *resurrection*).

a prayer] Or, "low whisper;"—out of the depth of their humiliation and feebleness. Cp. xxix. 4.

when thy chastening...] Or, "Thy instruction (came) to them;"—reaching those hearts which had been steeled against it (cp. Jer. ii. 30, xxx. 14; Zeph. iii. 7).

17. The long-promised Seed of Israel, through whom blessing was to overspread the world, had not appeared. The sanguine expectations of the faithful had been continually disappointed. The nation had suffered the pains of labour; but in vain: no deliverer was born. And now the pangs were redoubled. Israel,—the outward, historical, Israel,—was enduring the sentence, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow" (Gen. iii. 16).

in thy sight] Rather, **at Thy presence** (lxiv. 1, 2, 3, *s. w.*). The approach of the Holy One caused agonies of sorrow to the sinful nation.

18. *brought forth wind*] Their protracted suffering had issued in "wind and vanity" (xli. 29). Such is the lot of the "whole creation;" which "travaileth in pain together," but is "subject to vanity" (Rom. viii. 20, 22). The antithesis is supplied in lxvi. 7—9.

we have not wrought any deliverance] Or, "we can do no deeds of salvation." We cannot emancipate this earth from "the bondage of corruption" (Rom. viii. 21). Instead of vanquishing the powers of evil, Israel was itself taken captive.

neither have the inhabitants of the world (*v.* 9, xxxviii. 11, *s. w.*) *fallen*] They who claim the world as theirs have not been subdued. They still rear their heads proudly. Babylon has not "fallen" (xxi. 9; cp. Ps. xxxvi. 12, xlv. 5; Hos. vii. 7; *s. w.*).

19. This verse is taken by some excellent commentators to be God's address to the Church. Yet the expression "thy dew" (LXX. *ἡ δρόσος ἡ παρὰ σοῦ*) leads one to take it rather as a continuation of the Church's supplication. The Targ. distinctly took it so: "Thou art He who dost quicken the dead," &c. Cp. Hos. xiv. 5.

Obs. It is evident that here, as in Hos. vi. 1, 2, the resurrection of the dead is not merely taught, but rather is assumed as a foundation truth.

Thy dead men shall live] Though dead, they are still Thine.

Obs. If the *land* was already Immanuel's (viii. 8), in a yet higher degree were the

gether with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

20 ¶ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

21 For, behold, the LORD [a] cometh out of his place to punish the [a] Micah 1. 3.

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people His;—those human children, whom by His Incarnation He had made to be His brethren; and whom as Redeemer He claimed a right to release by His own death from the power of death. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living" (Rom. xiv. 9). Only so could "death be swallowed up for ever" (xxv. 8).

together with...] Lit. "My dead body, they shall arise." The singular noun was used collectively in v. 25. It appears to be so here. Israel's slain shall be recalled to life. There may, however, be at the same time a reference to the remarkable passage in Deut. xxviii. 25, 26, where Israel is personified: "Thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; and *thy carcase* (*s. w.*) shall be meat unto the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the earth."—That carcase, "through whose *fall* salvation came unto the Gentiles" (Rom. xi. 11), shall be quickened again; and its recovery "shall be as life from the dead."

The LXX. has, *ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις.* Cp. John v. 28, 29.

Awake...ye that dwell in dust] Cp. Dan. xii. 2, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (*s. w.*). This was to be after a "time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation" (ib. 1).

Obs. 1. Now is the morning-dawn, for which the Church had waited (*v.* 9).

Obs. 2. This blessed "awaking" was no new article of faith;—David had looked forward to it (Ps. xvii. 15: cp. xlix. 14).

and sing] Or, "shout joyously;" *s. w. a.* lii. 8, 9; Ps. lix. 16, cxxxii. 9, 16.

thy dew] The dew of Thy blessing, "even life for evermore" (Ps. cxxxiii. 3);—Thy own grace, which shall make Israel revive and bear abundant fruit (Hos. xiv. 4—7);—the power of spiritual life, which proceeds from "the Child," whose name is "Wonderful," like dew "from the womb of the early dawn" (Ps. cx. 3), to quicken and sanctify perishing humanity;—this shall then, in that resurrection-morning, have completed its work.

as the dew of herbs] reviving the drooping vegetables (*s. w. a.* 2 K. iv. 39). So Kimchi, Vitr. Others (Targ., Vulg., Syr., Aben-E., Del., Ew.) *as the dew of lights*;—coming down from "the Father of lights," who "begat" the Apostolic Church "by the word of truth" (the word which "distils as the dew," Deut. xxxii. 2), that it might be "a kind of firstfruit of His creatures" (James i. 17, 18). Those life-giving particles of dew all reflected the rising "Sun of righteousness:"—whose rays were full of "the light of life" (Job xxxiii. 30); for "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John i. 4).

shall cast out the dead] the "long-dead" (*rephaim*, *v.* 14). Earth shall cast them out from her womb, unable any longer to detain them (Acts ii. 24;—so Vitr.).

20. The prophet had pointed to the day of final deliverance. God Himself now comforts His people by inviting them to take shelter in Him during the approaching deluge of wrath. There they would be safe;—as Noah was, when he entered the ark; as the Israelites were, when they were inside the houses sprinkled with Paschal blood; as Moses was, when hidden in the cleft of the rock, while the Lord passed by.

enter thou into thy chambers]—the "inner chamber" of God's covenanted mercy (cp. Ps. xxvii. 5, xxxi. 21, xci. 1). Take refuge there by devout prayer.

Obs. 1. Gehazi laid the staff of Elisha on the face of the dead child: but in vain; "the child *was not awaked*" (2 K. iv. 31). He could "work no deliverance." Then Elisha "went in, and *shut the door* upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord" (*v.* 33); and life was restored. The "dead lived."

Obs. 2. The LXX. has *εἴσελθε εἰς τὰ ταμιεῖά σου, ἀπόκλεισον τὴν θύραν σου, ἀποκρύβηθι...* Cp. Matt. vi. 6, *εἴσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμιεῖόν σου, καὶ κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου, πρόσευξαι τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ.*

hide thyself] Or, "take shelter" (xxxii. 2). Cp. on ii. 10.

as it were for a little moment] Cp. x. 25, liv. 7, 8. LXX. *μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον*:—words which have had a deeper meaning imparted to them by our Lord's discourse in John xvi. 16—22.

Obs. The whole interval, from the time when the righteous "enter into peace and rest on their beds" (lvii. 2) to the resurrection-morning, is but "a little while." (Cp. Rev. vi. 11.)

until the indignation (x. 5, 25) *be overpast*] *s. w. a.* in Ps. lvii. 1, "In the shadow of Thy wings will I take refuge, *until* these calamities *be overpast*."

21. The first clause *For, behold...place* is also found in Micah i. 3;—where God's

inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her [†] blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

[†] Heb. *bloods.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *The care of God over his vineyard.* 7 *His chastisements differ from judgments.* 12 *The church of Jews and Gentiles.*

IN that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the [‡] piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that *is* in the sea.

[‡] Or, *crossing like a bar.*

2 In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine.

3 I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

4 Fury *is* not in me: who would

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judgments upon *Israel* are foretold. Cp. Hos. v. 15.

to punish...] Lit. "to visit the iniquity of the inhabitant of the earth (xxiv. 17) upon him." Cp. xxiv. 21; Jer. xxv. 12, l. 18, li. 44, 47, 52.

her blood] The innocent blood which had been shed upon it (Gen. iv. 11). Cp. Rev. vi. 10.

no more cover] Cp. Job xvi. 18; Ezek. xxiv. 7, 8.

CHAP. XXVII. This outpouring of the vials of wrath, though it involve the whole Church in suffering, shall not injure the faithful. The mighty foe shall be stricken through; but Israel shall be purified and restored.

1. *his...sword*] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 41.

sore] Lit. "hard;"—unrelenting; inflexibly stern.

shall punish] Or, "visit upon;" *s. w. a.* xxvi. 21.

leviathan, &c.] The literal reference would appear to be to the two great world-powers, Asshur-Babel and Egypt; the former represented by Leviathan, "King over all the sons of pride" (Job xli. 34), the latter by the Dragon (li. 9; Ps. lxxiv. 13; Ezek. xxix. 3). The double description of Leviathan, as "the fugitive serpent," and "the crooked serpent," may correspond to the two empires, the Assyrian and Babylonian (cp. Jer. l. 18): Assyria being symbolized (as Delitzsch suggests) by its swift, straight river, the Tigris; Babylon by its singularly curved and winding river, the Euphrates.

the piercing serpent] Most moderns render, "the fugitive (or, fleet) serpent." LXX. ὄφιν φεύγοντα. In Job xxvi. 13, where the same expression is used of a constellation, the LXX. has δράκων ἀποστάτης.

Obs. These earthly organizations were, after all, only instruments worked by an enemy, who is called, in Rev. xii. 7—17, "the old serpent" and "the great dragon." Cp. on xiv. 12, xxiv. 21.

2. *In that day*] The accents place a pause here.—The sequence of the verses might lead us to expect another denunciation of judgment; but instead of that, we hear the voice of God calling His people's attention to a new and beauteous sight, over which they are bidden to rejoice. **In that day:—a vineyard of red-wine! Sing ye unto her.** Rejoice over it, as the Israelites on emerging from the wilderness rejoiced over the well of water (Num. xxi. 17). "Sing unto her;" and forget that mournful song about the Vineyard that bore wild grapes and was laid desolate.

For "red-wine" (*s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 14) some MSS. read "delight;"—perhaps, from Amos v. 11.

3. *do keep it*] Or, "guard it" (*s. w. a.* xxvi. 3). It is the word used in Deut. xxxii. 10: "He kept him as the apple of His eye."

I will water it...] In contrast (as Mr Birks notices) with the sentence in v. 6; "I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it."

lest any hurt it] Lit. "visit upon her" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 1, xxiv. 21, xxvi. 21). As, in that night when the destroyer went forth over the land of Egypt, Israel was protected against his sword; so now, in this time of universal visitation, the vineyard should be shielded from the avenging stroke.

4. *Fury is not in me*] Lit. "belongeth not to Me."—Not fury; though, indeed, "vengeance and retribution" do belong to Him (Deut. xxxii. 35). The sentence issued of old against His vineyard proceeded from the love, which is ever watchfully guarding it. In Him there is no dark element of fury: all is light (1 John i. 5). His dealings with sinners, who resist the plans of eternal goodness, involve what wears a wrathful aspect; as it is said: "If ye will not for all this hearken unto Me, but will walk contrary unto Me, then will I walk contrary unto you in fury, and I, even I" (the gracious and merciful) "will chastise you seven times for your sins" (Lev. xxvi. 27, 28). But this "fury" must not be attributed to Me;—it is none of Mine; it belongs wholly to yourselves. In Me is only love.

who would set...] Or, **who will set me** *briers and thorns* **in battle array?** *I would* **step against** *them* (one step would be suf-

set the briers *and* thorns against me in battle? I would ‖ go through them, I would burn them together.

‖ Or, *march against.*

5 Or let him take hold of my strength, *that* he may make peace with me; *and* he shall make peace with me.

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 ¶ Hath he smitten him, † as he smote those that smote him? *or* is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

† Heb. *according to the stroke of those.*

8 In measure, ‖ when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: ‖ he

‖ Or, *when thou sendest it forth.*

‖ Or, *when he removeth it.*

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ficient); *I would burn them together* (or, at once). What need can there be of passionate excitement to Omnipotence? One moment's actual conflict with It would consume the mightiest hosts of enemies.

On the "briers and thorns," cp. v. 6, vii. 24, ix. 18:—2 S. xxiii. 6. 7.

5. Such is the inevitable consequence of opposing the Holy One. Must the sinner then, of necessity, perish? No, *there is an alternative provided;*—

Or] **Or else:**—if any wish to cease from that ruinous opposition to divine love, here is an opening granted them for doing so.

The emphatic particle seems to recall the memory of the gracious provision made at the end of that severe chapter, Lev. xxvi: "I will walk contrary unto them;...*or else* (*s. w.*) let their uncircumcised heart then humble itself;" *v.* 41.

let him...] Or, "let a man lay hold of My strong refuge;"—let him flee to My altar of reconciliation (cp. 1 K. i. 50). He may escape My "severity," if he will embrace My "goodness" (Rom. xi. 22).

The following words are very striking. In xxvi. 12 we had, "Thou wilt ordain peace *for us:* for all our work hast Thou wrought *for us.*" Here God invites the sinner to make peace *for Him;* as if *He* were the party who sued for cessation of hostilities (cp. 2 Cor. v. 20). "Let him make peace FOR ME: peace let him make FOR ME." Let him assure Me by a solemn league (Josh. ix. 15, *s. w.*) that he will not again wage war with Me;—for *he* is the aggressor. I have provided a covenant of peace (Num. xxv. 12), to be administered by the Prince of Peace (ix. 6), who in His own person will bear "the chastisement of their peace" (liii. 5). I have issued a proclamation, "Peace! Peace!" (xxvi. 3); only—not for the wicked; for him is no peace (xlviii. 22). He refuses My terms of peace. He (poor thorn or brier!) challenges the "consuming fire" of My almighty justice.

6. *He shall cause...*] Rather, **In the coming times Jacob shall strike root.** So Aben-Ezra, Kimchi, &c.

Israel shall blossom and bud] Israel, so long cut off from the Fountain of Life,—a mere dry rod,—shall be like Aaron's rod which "budded...and bloomed blossoms" (Num. xvii. 8; H. 23, *s. w.*). Cp. Hos. xiv. 6—8.

and fill] *And* **they shall** *fill.* The largeness of the promise here given corresponds to the blessing on Ephraim (Gen. xlviii. 19), "His seed shall be *the fulness of the nations*;" and to the teaching of St Paul in Rom. xi. 15. The LXX. ἐμπλησθήσεται ἡ οἰκουμένη τοῦ καρποῦ αὐτοῦ.

Heavy, then, as Israel's discipline was, the faithful might endure it hopefully. They "were chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. xi. 32; cp. Ps. xciv. 12—15, cxviii. 18).

7. *those that smote him*] Assyria (x. 20) and Babylon (xiv. 5, 6). These were left "without remnant" (xiv. 22). But not so Israel.

them that are slain by him] Or, "His slain" (Del.);—the enemies who should fall beneath the divine judgment "in the day of the great slaughter" (xxx. 25). The faithful Church, which could say, "For Thy sake we are slain" (Ps. xliv. 22), would be raised to a glorious life (Rom. viii. 36, 37).

8. *In measure*] Rather, **With measure by measure:** Hebr. "with *seah-seah.*" A *seah,* being the third part of an ephah, was a moderate measure. With forbearance and graduated severity,—dealing out punishment in carefully adjusted quantities, and at successive times,—"not suffering Thy whole displeasure to arise,"—"correcting with judgment, not in anger" (Jer. x. 24, xxx. 11);—thus, **when Thou puttest her away** (l. 1), **wilt Thou contend with her.**

Israel was now about to be "sent away" from her home. Judah would soon be so, too (cp. Jer. iii. 8). During that period of separation God was "pleading" or "contending" with His people (l. 8, lvii. 16; cp. Hos. ii. 2, H. 4; Ps. ciii. 9; Amos vii. 4).

he stayeth...] A simpler rendering is: **He sighed with His rough breath in the day of east-wind.** When He sent His hot and stormy desert-blast (Ps. xlviii. 7) on Israel,—in that "day of whirlwind" (Amos i. 14; cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 12)—amidst the rough and stern (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 1) severity, which He breathed into the tempest, there was an undertone of sadness and grief, as of the mourning dove (xxxviii. 14, lix. 11, *s. w.*),

stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this *is* all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and ‖ images shall not stand up.

‖ Or, *sun images.*

10 Yet the defenced city *shall be* desolate, *and* the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, *and* set them on fire: for it *is* a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river un-

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or of one making lamentation (xvi. 7, *s. w.*); the Just One sighing as in meditation on His own "strange," yet necessary, work of correction.

Theod. translates well: *ἐν τῇ ἐξαποστολῇ αὐτῆς κρινεῖς αὐτήν· ἐμελέτησεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ τῷ σκληρῷ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ καύσωνος.*

9. *By this therefore...*] Better, **Therefore, by this...** Because God is so compassionately severe, He is purifying His people by His correction.

The words rendered, "iniquity," "purge," "take away," "sin," are the same that were used in vi. 7.

The lowly and penitent prophet had been purified from sin, and consecrated to perform a high work for God. So should it be at length with Israel, when God's chastisements had taken full effect upon them. The hurricane which had been let loose on them, overthrowing their idolatrous altars, was meant to crush their proud hearts, and thereby fit them for offering God's "sacrifice" (Ps. li. 17).

and this is all the fruit]—of the punishment inflicted on Israel. God has no other object in view than this,—that He may "take away" (*s. w. a.* xxv. 8) His people's sin.

Obs. The LXX. has *καὶ τοῦτο ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὴν ἁμαρτίαν αὐτοῦ*, quoted by St Paul (along with lix. 20) in the chapter which speaks of Israel's national recovery (see Rom. xi. 27).

when he maketh...] This is best taken as a resumption of the "by this," which occurred in the earlier part of the verse; "in that He maketh all the altar-stones as chalkstones beaten in pieces; &c."

A comparison of xvii. 8, "altars,...asherahs, and sun-images," shews that Samaria was *primarily* referred to. The "altar-stones" set up by Jeroboam (1 K. xii. 32, 33), to "make Israel to sin," should be *as chalkstones beaten* **in pieces** (*s. w. a.* Ps. ii. 9) and calcined.

shall not stand up] Or, **rise again** (*s. w. a.* xxvi. 14).

10. *Yet...*] Rather, **For** *the defenced city is* **solitary** (*s. w. a.* Lam. i. 1; Lev. xiii. 46; Micah vii. 14), **a homestead that is deserted** *and* **forsaken** (vii. 16, *s. w.*), *like* **the** *wilderness* (cp. xxxii. 14, 15). The word for "deserted" (the one that was used in xvi. 2 of the "emptied" nest) refers back, apparently, to *v.* 8. The deserted home is that of her who is "put away."

there shall the calf...] Cp. v. 17, xvii. 2, xxxii. 17.

11. *When the boughs*] Or, "Because..." LXX. *διὰ τὸ ξηρανθῆναι.* Israel had refused to draw its life from God, who "*made it*" and "*formed it*" (*s. w. a.* xxii. 11, xxix. 16, xliv. 2, xlv. 18; Deut. xxxii. 6). After long forbearance on God's part, it had continued impenitent and faithless. It must now be broken off (John xv. 6; Rom. xi. 17—20).

a people of no understanding] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 28. They had been provided with every help to high moral and religious intelligence (Deut. iv. 6—8); but had frustrated God's gracious design.

will not have mercy] Or, **compassion** (xlix. 15, *s. w.*).

will shew them no favour] Or, **mercy**: *s. w. a.* in xxvi. 10;—which verse explains why no compassion or mercy can now be extended. It would only harden them in sin.

12. As in so many other cases, the penal sentence is only just uttered, when an alleviating promise is given (cp. ii. 2, x. 20, xxix. 18).

shall beat off]—namely, the remaining olive-berries (Deut. xxiv. 20); see xvii. 6. Yet as the same word is used in xxviii. 27 of "beating out" grain (cp. Judg. vi. 11), it may be better to take it so here:—He *shall beat* **out** [His grain]; over the whole area of Israel's land, *from the* **flood** *of the river* [Euphrates] *to the* **brook** *of Egypt* (Num. xxxiv. 5; 1 K. viii. 65, *s. w.*),—the Wady-el-Arish. He will separate the wheat and the chaff, and will gather in the seed, not *en masse*, as at the Exodus, but *one by one*; each

to the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.

13 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *The prophet threateneth Ephraim for their pride and drunkenness.* 5 *The residue shall be advanced in the kingdom of Christ.* 7 *He rebuketh their error.* 9 *Their untowardness to learn,* 14 *and their security.* 16 *Christ the sure foundation is promised.* 18 *Their security shall be tried.* 23 *They are incited to the consideration of God's discreet providence.*

WOE to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim,

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individual grain being separately tested (cp. Jer. iii. 14), and not one genuine grain being lost (Amos ix. 9).

13. Nor shall the in-gathering be only from the land of Israel. As, in the jubile-year, it was on the evening of the Day of Atonement (Lev. xxv. 9) that the jubile-trumpet sounded, which proclaimed, that "every man might return to his own possession;" so now, after Israel's sin has been "purged" (*v.* 9), *a great trumpet shall be blown*;—inaugurating a year of redemption for scattered Israel. (Cp. Matt. xxiv. 31.)

which were ready to perish] *s. w. a.* Deut. xxvi. 5. Cp. Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

and the outcasts] Or, "and they that were outcasts." Assyria and Egypt, as elsewhere, are the two chief representatives of the heathen world (cp. xi. 16; Hos. xi. 11):—while the "holy mountain" is the centre to which the prophecy is ever returning (iv. 3—6, xii. 6, xiv. 32, xviii. 7, xxiv. 23).

CHAPS. XXVIII—XXXV. The prophet had been contemplating the judgments which were to come in the course of ages, upon the nations of the world. He is now brought back to his own time and people.

Nearly twenty years have passed since he first foretold (vii. 17, viii. 4—8) the approaching desolation of Samaria. The crisis is now close at hand. The flood of northern invaders is ready to be let loose (xxviii. 2); and the "crown of Ephraim's pride" will be hurled to the ground (xxviii. 1—4).

At this solemn period a most important work had to be accomplished in Judah, through the prophet's ministry. If Jerusalem was to be delivered from Assyria through a signal manifestation of divine power, there must be some degree of religious and moral preparedness in the people for such a display of mercy.

Indeed, a great outward reformation had already taken place at the beginning of Hezekiah's reign. But as this had originated in a very sudden movement of men's minds (2 Chro. xxix. 36), it might soon pass away, unless it were followed up by steady culture and patient discipline. This, accordingly, was the work in which Isaiah now engaged.

A very complex task it was.

The "sinners in Zion" (xxxiii. 14) needed to be thoroughly alarmed; the infidel and scoffer to be boldly reproved (xxviii. 14, xxx. 10, 11); the worldly and careless to be stirred up to repentance (xxxii. 9). The men, who trusted in their political schemes, and thought the true remedy for their Assyrian troubles was an alliance with Egypt (it would seem that there were such even in Judah; see xxx. 1—7, xxxi. 1—3), must be assured that God would bring their schemes to nought. But how was all this to be effected without unduly disheartening the "poor and meek" (xxix. 19, xxx. 19)?

Conversely:—The faithful disciples were to be cheered. They were to be told, that the Lord Jehovah had laid in Zion a surely grounded Foundation (xxviii. 16); that He Himself would defend Jerusalem and preserve it (xxxi. 5); that the Holy City should be "as a tabernacle, not one of whose stakes should ever be removed" (xxxiii. 20). How was this to be proclaimed without fostering a dangerous reliance upon outward Church-privileges (xxix. 1, 3)?

The prophetic word was put forth in such a way as to meet these various needs of the people;—giving abundant warning to the rebellious, confirming and establishing the true-hearted, and putting *all* on their probation.

Obs. 1. As there were six "woes" in ch. v, so there are in this section:—xxviii. 1, xxix. 1, 15, xxx. 1, xxxi. 1, xxxiii. 1.

Obs. 2. The concluding part of ch. xxxii makes it probable that Samaria was yet standing, when that chapter was written.

Obs. 3. In chh. xxxiv and xxxv, which are bound to the preceding by plain verbal links (see above, p. 23), the denouncement and the consolation reach their highest points.

CHAP. XXVIII. Samaria is soon to be ruined;—Jerusalem to be chastised. The difference of treatment applied to each is ordered for wise and benign purposes by Him who "is wonderful in counsel, excellent in working" (*v.* 29).

1. *Woe to*] Or, "Alas for" (i. 4). There should be no stop after "pride" (cp. *v.* 3). Samaria stood as "the crown of the pride of

whose glorious beauty *is* a fading flower, which *are* on the head of the fat valleys of them that are, †overcome with wine!

†Heb. *broken.*

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, *which* as a tempest of hail *and* a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden †under feet:

†Heb. *with feet.*

4 And the glorious beauty, which *is* on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, *and* as the hasty fruit before the summer; which *when* he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he †eateth it up.

†Heb. *swalloweth.*

5 ¶ In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

7 ¶ But they also have erred

Ephraim's drunkards;"—who were both drunken with wine (Amos iv. 1, vi. 6), and intoxicated with pride (cp. xix. 14, xxix. 9).

whose glorious...] More simply, **and the** *fading flower* **of his** *glorious beauty* (cp. *v.* 4), *which* **is** *on the head* (or at the head) *of.*

Samaria was like a majestic crown, surmounted by a chaplet of gorgeous flowers. Already the chaplet was fading away (cp. xl. 7, 8, *s. w.*); like a garland on the head of one of her own revellers.

the fat valleys] Rather, *the* **rich valley:** lit. "the valley of oils" (*s. w. a.* xxv. 6). Samaria stood on a hill of a long oval form, which swells up in the midst of a fertile valley, shut in by mountains (cp. Amos iii. 9). Dr Robinson speaks of the site as combining, in a singular degree, "strength, fertility, and beauty."

Here, as in xxv. 6, the "oils" may point to the rich unguents used at banquets.

overcome with wine] Lit. "beaten," or "battered:" *s. w. a.* in xvi. 8; Prov. xxiii. 35 (where the drunkard says, "They have *beaten* me, and I knew it not").

The LXX, instead of "overcome with wine," gave, *οἱ μεθύοντες ἄνευ οἴνου*:—shewing that they felt as if more than bodily intoxication were pointed at. Cp. xxix. 9.

2. *the Lord*] ADONAY (iii. 17).

a mighty...] Rather, **a strong** *and* **mighty** *one*, **like a hailstorm**, &c. The word for "strong" is the same as in xl. 10, and in 1 K. xix. 11 (where it is used of the "strong wind," which "rent the mountains"). The potent king of Assyria is God's instrument. (Cp. Ezek. xxx. 24.) His armies are as a storm (*s. w. a.* xxv. 4) sent by Him:—a **tempest of destruction** (*s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 24, Ps. xci. 6).

shall cast down...] Lit. "he hath brought down to the earth with hand." This strong one, rushing in with the force of a tempest, has laid his hand on both crown and garland, and flung them to the ground.

3. Render literally, **It shall be** *trodden* **underfoot;** (even) *the crown of* **the pride of Ephraim's** *drunkards.* Cp. *v.* 18 (*s. w.*).

4. Rather, *And* **the fading flower of** *his glorious beauty, which is*...(cp. *v.* 1), **shall be** *as* **an early ripe fig,** &c. The usual time for gathering figs is not before August. The early fig gathered in June is a rarity and delicacy (cp. Micah vii. 1). It is easily shaken off the tree (Nahum iii. 12). See Dr Tristram, 'N. H. B.,' p. 352.

5. *In that day*] When Samaria's "glorious beauty" is at an end, then will the Lord invest *the residue of His people* (here, it would seem, Judah, cp. xxxvii. 4) with His own *beauty* and *glory.* Cp. iv. 2 (observing that in iv. 5 we have the "spirit of judgment" with which the following verse commences).

6. *in judgment*] Lit. "upon the judgment;"—the King's throne of judgment; see 1 K. vii. 7.

that turn the battle to...] Or, *that* **turn back** (xxxvi. 9) **war at** *the gate*,—war which has advanced even up to the gate of the besieged city (xxii. 7, *s. w.*).

According to the Masoretes the principal stop is to be placed after "spirit of judgment;"—this spirit being supplied "to him that sitteth upon the judgment, and to mighty men (iii. 25, *s. w.*) that turn back, &c." The King should prosper, because he administered right; and his valiant ones, because they defended the right;—for the gate, in which "judgment was established" (Amos v. 15), would be impregnable. (See below, Note A.) In any case, compare Micah iii. 8; where "judgment" and "might" (*s. w.*) are spoken of as inwrought by "the Spirit of the Lord."

7. Yet even the residue, Judah, included many who imitated the pride and unbelief and spiritual intoxication of Ephraim. Cp. 2 K. xvii. 18, 19: "The Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his

through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit *and* filthiness, *so that there is* no place *clean*.

9 ¶ Whom shall he teach know-

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sight: there was none *left* [no residue] but the tribe of Judah only. *Also Judah* kept not the commandment of the Lord."

But they also] Or, **Yet these also.**

have erred] *s. w. a.* Prov. xx. 1 ("is deceived"). They have "erred from God's commandments" (Ps. cxix. 21; cp. 10, 118; Prov. xix. 27, *s. w.*).

wine...strong drink] v. 11, 22, lvi. 12.

are out of the way] Or, **have gone astray**;—"away from God after their idols" (Ezek. xliv. 10; cp. ch. xxix. 24, liii. 6; Ps. xcv. 10, cxix. 110; Ezek. xlviii. 11).

the priest]—who was forbidden, while on duty, to take any wine or strong drink, Lev. x. 1—9.

the prophet]—whose vocation partook of the Nazirite character; cp. 1 S. i. 11. Isaiah's contemporary, Micah, represents the prophets as "making God's people to err," by "prophesying to them of wine and strong drink" (ii. 11, iii. 5),—promising them an uninterrupted course of worldly prosperity.

they are swallowed up] they and "all their wisdom" (Ps. cvii. 27; cp. ch. iii. 12). They are submerged in that rolling sea of worldly enjoyment.

of wine] Or, **by reason of** *wine*. The metaphor is explained in the next clause:—

they err in vision] Or, "through the seer;"—who has "seen vanity and lying divination" for them (Ezek. xiii. 3).

they stumble in judgment] They are feeble and irresolute in condemning even heinous crime, such as *is to be punished by the judge* (cp. Job xxxi. 11, 28, *s. w.*).

8. Those intoxicating flatterers have besotted the whole people (cp. xxix. 9); debasing the national conscience. Everywhere the victims of delusion are greedily quaffing those "great swelling words of vanity;"—and vomiting them forth again, in very nausea.

The like figure was used of Egypt's self-deluding wisdom in xix. 14.

all tables] to which these professors of false wisdom have invited their guests to come, tempting them away from true wisdom (Vitr.), who has "prepared her wine and furnished her table," that the simple may gain understanding and live (Prov. ix. 1—11).

filthiness] *s. w. a.* iv. 4.

so that...] Or, "no room (remains)" (cp. v. 8):—no room for truth and piety. Delusion has occupied even the priest, the prophet, the judge;—the whole "place" (2 S. vii. 10) which God provided for His people.

This description of Judah's religious state may well appear strange, when we think of the great passover, held (probably) three or four years previously. But it must be remembered how comparatively slight the reformation then effected was. There is little indication of penitential sorrow having laid hold of the people. They had broken their idols;—so far it was well;—but they soon settled down in complacent dreams of revived national prosperity. They "honoured the Lord with their lips," although "their heart was far from Him" (xxix. 13). They grasped at the prophet's words, and misused them; as if what was meant for the encouragement of the lowly and upright were intended to promise the nation immunity from the threatened "scourge." Thus their outward reform became to most of them like a draught of spiritual intoxication. (Cp. Micah iii. 11.)

9—13. The general drift of these verses is obvious: but there has been a great variety of views respecting the details. It may be well, therefore, to fix one or two landmarks, at the outset, to assist in the interpretation.

(1) It is evident that the verbs "he will speak" in *v.* 11, and "he said" in *v.* 12, refer to God. But the sequence of *vv.* 9—11 is such that we can scarcely help assigning the same nominative to the verbs in *v.* 9.

This inference is confirmed by the fact that in *v.* 26 we have the same verb used of God: "His God doth teach him." Indeed it was so used in ii. 3. (Compare also 1 K. viii. 36; Ps. xxv. 12, xxxii. 8.)

It follows that *v.* 9 is the prophet's question;—resembling the one with which he opens ch. liii (see below).

(2) Since the second half of *v.* 9 has no particle to give it an interrogative character, it is best taken as the answer to the question contained in the former half (cp. xxxvii. 23, xli. 4).

(3) The expression, "precept on precept, &c." (*vv.* 10, 13), represents the constant iteration of the same simple fundamental points of teaching, amidst every variation of outward form. Whatever might be the subject of the prophet's discourse,—Philistia or Tyre, Egypt or Babylon,—there was always something for the admonition of the docile hearer. What appeared to the scornful and superficial to be a string of harsh enigmas, had, at least, "a little here, a little there" of clear and important meaning shining through;

ledge? and whom shall he make to
† Heb. *the hearing?* understand † doctrine? *them that are*
weaned from the milk, *and* drawn
from the breasts.
‖ Or, hath been. 10 For ‖ *precept must be* upon pre-
cept, precept upon precept; line upon
line, line upon line; here a little, *and*
there a little:
† Heb. *stammerings of lips.* 11 For with † [a] stammering lips
and another tongue ‖ will he speak
to this people.
[a] 1 Cor. 14. 21. ‖ Or, *he hath spoken.* 12 To whom he said, This *is* the

which the lowly disciple gathered up and esteemed most precious.

9. The people at large—priests and prophets included (cp. Jer. v. 31, vi. 13)—were intoxicated with self-conceit and worldly confidence. Yet God's messenger was not discouraged. His teaching, he knew, would contribute to work out two great designs;—the confirmation of the upright, the probation of the insincere.

Whom shall he teach knowledge?] The question is like that of liii. 1.—Where there exists so much spiritual blindness, are there any prepared to understand the lessons of divine wisdom?

doctrine] Rather, **the message**, *s. w. a.* in *v.* 19, and in liii. 1 (A. V. "report"). It is the statement which the prophet has "*heard* (*s. w.*) from the Lord God of Hosts" (*v.* 22, xxi. 13; Obad. 1). This word strongly favours the view, that it is the prophet who is speaking.

weaned from the milk] Whose "soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps. cxxxi. 2); and who, unlike the scornful men of Judah (ch. v. 15), "have no lofty heart or haughty eyes" (Ps. cxxxi. 1).

drawn from...] Or, "set free from..." (Ges.). LXX. ἀπεσπασμένοι. They have been emancipated from their attachment to the outward benefits of the legal dispensation; which, they knew, were soon to be taken from them: but they would still have a never-failing "rest" and "refreshing" (*v.* 12).

10. *For precept must be...*] Or (marg.), "hath been..." It is a description of the prophet's past method of instruction. He had unceasingly provided for the people's wants, adding one practical lesson to another in a long series. He, whose lips had been purified by a seraph, was yet condescending and "gentle" (1 Thess. ii. 7), as a nurse teaching her children.

line upon line] Or, "rule upon rule;" *s. w. a.* in *v.* 17. He was ever recalling men to the principles of truth and righteousness.

here a little...]—always supplying them with some modicum of comfort or correction.

In his spiritual husbandry the prophet used the same minuté discrimination, the same adjustment of means to end, as are set forth in the parable of *vv.* 23—29.

11. *stammering lips*] Lit. "stammerings (or, derisions, see Note B) of lip;"—those *designed* stammerings, which provided wholesome instruction for the lowly hearer, and yet permitted the scorner to delude himself (as it is said, "Surely He scorneth the scorners, but He giveth grace unto the lowly," Prov. iii. 34).

and another tongue] A tongue that deviated widely from the ordinary style of speech; sometimes resorting to strangely bold figures, and constantly employing metaphor and parable and allegory (which last is almost literally "other speech," ἀλληγορία).

Obs. The verse is referred to in 1 Cor. xiv. 21; where the apostle pointed out that the gift of "tongues" was in its nature inferior to that of "prophecy," or the exposition of divine truth:—the former being rather "a sign" to unbelievers (challenging their *attention*) than a means of actual *conviction*.

this people] See on vi. 9.

12. *To whom...*] Or, "Forasmuch as He said unto them," assigning the reason of His now withdrawing behind the veil of allegory. He had spoken to them (for seven centuries long) in clear terms, *and they would not hear.*

This is...] Or, *This is the rest;* **give ye rest to him that is** *weary; and this*, &c.

This—the kingdom of righteousness, and not earthly prosperity in Canaan,—is the rest to which you, and through you the nations, are invited (xi. 10). Canaan, stripped of God's presence, is not your rest (Exod. xxxiii. 14); "it is polluted, and will destroy you" (Micah ii. 10). Solomon's temple is not the rest (lxvi. 1);—the heart that is athirst for God will find its ceremonial, *of itself*, to be "a weary land, where no water is" (Ps. lxiii. 1). Still less can the shadow of Egypt be your rest (xxx. 2—7). Cease from your fruitless wanderings then. Return to your true rest (Ps. cxvi. 7). *Give rest* to the poor, suffering, nation, that is "wearied with the greatness of her way" (lvii. 10); to weary Jerusalem (Jer. iv. 31); to "the daughter of Zidon," who can find "no rest" (xix. 12); to Babylon, "wearied in the multitude of her counsels" (xlvii. 13; Jer. li. 58); to the peoples of the world, that "weary themselves for very vanity" (Hab. ii. 13).

Obs. The work, in which carnal Israel failed, was accomplished by the "servant of the Lord;" see l. 4.

rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

13 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

14 ¶ Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which *is* in Jerusalem.

15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

16 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation [b] a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

[b] Psal. 118. 22. Matth. 21. 42. Acts 4. 11. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 6, 7, 8.

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this is the refreshing] Aq. ἀνάψυξις (cp. Acts iii. 19). The noun occurs *here only;* though nearly the same is found in Jer. vi. 16. The verb is used in li. 4; Jer. xxxi. 2, l. 34.

Obs. 1. The words for "rest" and "refreshing" occur in Deut. xxviii. 65, where the penalty of disobedience was proclaimed aforehand. "(The Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even to the other.) And among these nations shalt thou find no ease (*refreshing*), neither shall the sole of thy foot have *rest*."

Obs. 2. Both Isai. xxviii. 9—13 and Jer. vi. 16 have their completion in Matt. xi. 25—30. Cp. more especially Isai. xxviii. 9 with Matt. xi. 25; and Jer. vi. 16 with Matt. xi. 29.

they would not] *s. w. a.* xxx. 9, 15, xlii. 24. (Cp. on i. 19.)

Obs. So, when Jesus had offered them the true rest, they *would not* embrace it, Matt. xxiii. 37, Luke xiii. 34 (οὐκ ἠθελήσατε).

13. *But...was...might*] Or, **So...shall be...may.** The word shall continue to press upon them as before; speaking so that "the meek shall increase their joy in the Lord" (xxix. 19), while "the wisdom of their (scornful) wise men perishes" (xxix. 14). That "other tongue," which spoke with almost angelic dignity, will appear to them to utter little more than a series of minute rules and dry elementary teachings.

might go...] Or, **may go on** *and* **stumble** (viii, 15, *s. w.*) *backward.* Blindly following their own devices they will encounter the rock, against which they shall be broken (Matt. xxi. 44).

14. *ye scornful men*] *s. w. a.* Prov. xxix. 8. Cp. below, *v.* 22, xxix. 20. They scoffed at the idea of divine retribution on sin, whether in the present, or in the future, world.

15. As for death and the world of darkness, to which the prophet had pointed (xxii. 13, 18, xxiv. 21), they had no apprehensions on that score. Their punctilious attention to the law had put them quite at their ease. Death would not come near them: or, if it did, Hades was to them no object of dread. They had got rid of all such alarms.

are we at agreement] (Cp. *v.* 18.) Or, "have we had an interview,"—an *éclaircissement;* so as to be on a perfectly good understanding with it.

the overflowing scourge] Cp. viii. 8, x. 26. The inundation was to rush in upon the land, as suddenly as if it were the stroke of a scourge.

shall pass through]—through the land. Or, "over" it (*s. w. a.* in *vv.* 18, 19).

lies...falsehood] *They* would have said: "our pious observances," or, "God's promises to us;" but the prophet substitutes terms which describe the true nature of their hopes. Their worship was hollow and unreal: they put a false interpretation on God's promises,—whether to David's house, or to Zion.

16. *Therefore*] In opposition to their vain confidence, he proclaims afresh, and with the utmost distinctness, *first*, the absolute immoveability of Zion's foundation-stone, and *secondly*, the certainty of *their* punishment.

The imagery may be taken from the substructure of Solomon's temple: of which (says Ewald, 'H. of Isr.,' III. 233, &c.) the remains "have been preserved to the present day, and appear *almost indestructible*... Through all these great and various demolitions and restorations on the surface, its foundations, with their gigantic walls (for the most part unseen), have been *indestructibly preserved*."

the Lord GOD] Hebr. *Adonay Yahveh: v.* 22; vii. 7.

Behold, I lay...] Rather, **I have laid...** Lit. "Behold I am He that hath grounded a stone in Zion." So Rashi: who adds in paraphrase; "Behold already it has been decreed before Me, and I have established a king, the Messiah; who shall be in Zion a stone of proof."

In the promises of vii. 14, viii. 14, ix. 6, 7, the foundation stone had already been laid.

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

18 ¶ And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be † trodden down by it.

† Heb. *a treading down to it.*

19 From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only ‖ *to* understand the report.

‖ Or, when *he shall make* you *to understand doctrine.*

20 For the bed is shorter than that *a man* can stretch himself *on it:* and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it.*

21 For the LORD shall rise up as *in* mount [c] Perazim, he shall be

[c] 2 Sam. 5. 20. 1 Chron. 14. 11.

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a tried stone] Lit. "a stone of proof;" which may mean either (1) one that can stand every kind of test,—able to resist even the pressure of death and Hades: or (2), that tries whatever is laid upon it, and brings out their qualities. (Cp. Ezek. xxi. 13, H. 18, *s. w.*)

a precious...] Or, *a precious corner-stone* **of most** *sure foundation:*—alluding to the "great stones, *costly* (*s. w.*) stones," which were brought for the foundation of Solomon's temple (1 K. v. 17). Cp. Ps. cxviii. 22, (1 Cor. iii. 12).

This new foundation (most comforting to the faithful) was full of menacing import to the worldly. It implied that *the present temple was to pass away.* Solomon's temple was not the house of "rest," wherein "the Lord would dwell for ever" (Ps. lxviii. 16).

he that believeth]—who relies upon this firm foundation (cp. vii. 10).

shall not make haste] Or, **be in haste.** He shall not be in trepidation at this or that change of events. "His heart is established" (Ps. cxii. 8). Instead of hurrying after human schemes, he quietly abides God's time.

It was unbelief that had said, "Let Him *hasten* (*s. w.*) His work" (v. 19).

17. In the erection of that new temple all should be done with the greatest exactness.

will I lay to the line...] Or, **set for a rule** (*vv.* 10, 13, *s. w.*), *and righteousness* **for a plumb-line**; to test the truth of each stone and its fitness for a place in the building.

18. *shall be disannulled*] Or, "obliterated:"—while their sin, alas! remained unobliterated (xxii. 14, *s. w.*).

trodden down by it] Cp. v. 5, vii. 25, x. 6.

19. *From the time that...*] Rather, **As oft as it passeth through** (2 K. iv. 8) *it shall take you* **away** (Jer. xv. 15); *for...pass* **through.** It will force its message imperiously on those who would not listen to the gentle voice that was ready *morning by morning* to "speak a word in season" (l. 4).

vexation only] Rather, **utter** *vexation.* It shall be a cause of unmingled terror *to understand the* **message** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 9). When the prophet proclaimed it, they thought it not worth their attention. Now they understand it fully; too late to escape from it. They are plunged in deep "commotion" (marg. of 2 Chro. xxix. 8, *s. w.*) and alarm by it; and shortly will be "tossed backwards and forwards among all the kingdoms of the earth" (Jer. xv. 4, *s. w.*).

The word for "vexation" occurs of Israel's troubled condition during the exile in Deut. xxviii. 25; Jer. xxiv. 9, xxix. 18, xxxiv. 17.

The Vulg. otherwise:—"Et tantummodo sola vexatio *intellectum dabit* auditui."

20. They flattered themselves that they had prepared an easy and secure couch to slumber upon; their carnal wisdom and Pharisaic righteousness. How miserably insufficient should it prove!

21. God would put forth His power as suddenly and overwhelmingly as in the old time He had put it forth at Perazim (1 Chro. xiv. 11) and at Gibeon (ib. 16). Then, indeed, it was against the *enemies* of Israel; but now it is to do a work that is "strange" and "alien" to Him;—to treat His own people as "strangers" and "aliens," because they had made themselves such. Israel had become like Philistines. For, "when the Philistines *heard that David was anointed king over Israel*" (1 Chro. xiv. 8), they went up to attack him. So was it with the men of Israel, when Isaiah proclaimed the kingdom of Immanuel;—they "would not have Him to reign over them."

Obs. In 1 Chro. xiv. 12, the panic-stricken Philistines "left there their gods; and David gave commandment and they were *burned with fire.*" Such was the fate of the idol-gods of Samaria (Micah i. 7), and of the idolized temple at Jerusalem (ch. lxiv. 10, H. 11).

he shall be wroth] At Gibeon, this anger was intimated by "a sound of marching" heard in the air (1 Chro. xiv. 15).—The rumours which prevailed among the Jews a little before the final siege of Jerusalem, about "armed battalions" being seen marching across the sky (Joseph. 'J. W.,' VI. 5), prove

[d] Josh. 10. 10, 12. 2 Sam. 5. 25. 1 Chron. 14. 16.

wroth as *in* the valley of [d]Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

23 ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

24 Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

25 When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in [1] the principal wheat and

[1] Or, *the wheat in the principal* place, *and barley in the appointed* place.

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at least how deep a conviction had settled on the mind of the people that the powers of heaven were ranged against them.

his work] Cp. x. 12.

and bring to pass his act] Rather, *and* **execute His task**, *His* **alien task.** The word rendered "task" is used of hard, servile, toil. Their sins had compelled Him to undertake that irksome labour of chastisement.

To rescue them from their strange gods, He must act as One that was estranged. To recover them from their alienation of soul, He must treat them as aliens. (Cp. xxix. 5.)

22. *be ye not mockers...*] Or, **deal ye not scornfully** (cp. *v.* 14), *lest your bands* **grow** *strong*. The "bands" now on them were those of the Lord and His Christ (Ps. ii. 3):—light and easy (Matt. xi. 30) to the loyal; but capable of being turned (if judgment so required) into heavy chains and fetters (lii. 2, *s. w.*).

for I have heard...] More nearly, "because final and decisive (x. 23) is that which I have heard (coming) from the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, upon the whole earth." (See on x. 23.) The expression rendered "(coming) from," lit. *from with*, is the same that occurred in xxi. 10, where we have an anticipation of the parable which follows here:—"*O my threshing and child of my winnowing-floor!* that which I have heard (coming) from the Lord of Hosts..."

Obs. Ps. cxviii. 22, "*The stone*, which the builders refused, is become the chief *corner-stone*," appears plainly to refer to Isai. xxviii. 16: while the next verse, "From the Lord did this come: *marvellous* is it in our eyes," forms a link between Isai. xxviii. 22, 29 and xxix. 14.

23. The "scornful men" had gone astray for want of consideration. They did not reflect on the grandeur of God's work in the government of the world. If Israel (said they) were indeed the heir of these wondrous promises, how could it be subject to so many temporal sufferings? "Where was the promise of" their Deliverer's "coming"? Samaria was on the verge of ruin, and Jerusalem (to say the least) in extreme peril. Were it not wiser to give up those old notions of "faith" and turn to more practical measures,—an alliance with Egypt, for instance?

The prophet meets their objections by a parable. Let them think of the variety of processes they employed in agriculture; some of a longer, some of a shorter, duration; some of a gentler, some of a more violent, kind: but all wisely adapted to the attainment of certain ends. Such, too, was the case (in an incomparably higher degree) with God's "husbandry" (1 Cor. iii. 9). Each nation had its own special character; and each was subjected to discipline (Ps. xciv. 10) in a discriminating way, by Him whose wisdom and power are beyond the range of man's conceptions.

Give ye ear...] This preface (cp. Ps. xlix. 1—4, lxxviii. 1, 2) implies that careful thought will be needed to understand what follows. (See also ch. xxxii. 9.) Compare Matt. xiii. 9, 35, 43.

Obs. 1. Our Lord's earliest parable was drawn from agriculture.—The soil having been ploughed and harrowed by God's providential dealings with the nations, "the Sower" went forth to sow.

Obs. 2. The nations which have eventually borne fruit of the most lasting kind have passed through the severest discipline.

24. More nearly:—**Will he that ploweth to sow be alway plowing,** (alway) **opening and harrowing his land?** He must tear and rend the ground, that he may open it to the sunshine, and air, and rain; this is necessary with a view to the sowing; but this preparatory process does not go on for ever.

25. *made plain*] Or, "levelled:"—the word used in Ps. cxxxi. 2 of the soul's being disciplined into patient lowliness of faith.

the fitches] Or, "the anise;" properly, the *nigella sativa*, which resembles the cummin and, like it, bears aromatic seeds.

cast in...] Rather, **set** *the wheat* **in lines.** Vulg. "per ordinem."

the appointed...] Or, "the barley in the appointed place;"—the rows marked out for it. Theophrastus called barley "double-rowed" (δίστοιχος).

the rie...] Or, **the spelt** (see on Exod. ix. 32) **in its own border** (cp. Jer. xxxi.

‖ Or, *spelt.* † Heb. *border?* ‖ Or, *And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doth teach him.*

the appointed barley and the ‖rie in †their place?

26 ‖For his God doth instruct him to discretion, *and* doth teach him.

27 For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.

28 Bread *corn* is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break *it with* the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it *with* his horsemen.

29 This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, *which* is wonderful in counsel, *and* excellent in working.

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17). Vitringa notices that the three last of these grains are joined together in Homer ('Od.' IV. 604).

26. Similar discrimination is used after the seeds are gathered. Each is freed from the husk ("chastised," or "corrected") with due regard to its character.

For his God doth...] Rather, **and he correcteth them with judgment**; *his God doth instruct him.* Those prudential rules, drawn from experience, are really taught by God; who both endowed man with reason and supplied him with a basis for reasoning by forming the several plants after their kinds.

Shall not He, then, who "teacheth man knowledge" (Ps. xciv. 10), "correct with judgment?" (*s. w. a.* in Jer. xxx. 11, xlvi. 28; cp. x. 24).

Obs. This word "correct" is the focus of the parable. In 1 K. xii. 11 it is joined with the word for "scourge," which occurred above in *vv.* 15, 18. It is used in Lev. xxvi. 18, 26; Ps. xciv. 12, cxviii. 18. (Cp. on ch. xxvi. 16.)

27. *For the fitches...*] Or, *For the* **anise** *is not threshed with a* **sledge**, **nor a dray-wheel** &c. Both *nigella* and cummin seeds are readily detached from their capsules. Yet even here a difference is to be noted. "While the cummin can be easily separated from its case by a slender rod, the harder pod of the *nigella* requires to be beaten with a stout staff." (Dr Tristram, 'N. H. B.,' p. 445.)

28. The seeds just spoken of, as they differ from the cereals in being more lightly handled for the severance of the husk, so also in being left entire,—not ground.

Bread corn is **crushed** (or, "ground"):—and that further process is borne in mind at the earlier stage. The threshing arrangements are such as serve to unhusk the grain, and no more;—not to bruise it.

not ever] Or, *not* **for ever** (lvii. 16; Ps. ciii. 9). The comparison of God's severe visitations to threshing had been made in xxi. 10. The analogy is stereotyped in our word "tribulation" (from *tribulum*, a threshing-sledge).

nor break it] The A.V., like the Vulg. (neque vexabit), supplies a negative. But at the beginning of the principal member of a verse this is extremely harsh. Taking the clause, therefore (with Aben-Ezra, Pisc., Vitr., &c.), positively, render: "**But** he will rebuke (*lit.* throw into consternation) the wheel of his **dray**, **and** with his horsemen **will he not crush it**." The parable appears in this its last clause almost to become allegory.—Assyria should not crush Judah.

Obs. 1. When Israel was in the "tribulation" of the Red Sea, the process was suddenly stopped. "The Lord discomfited (or, threw into consternation, *s. w. a.* here) the host of the Egyptians; and He took off their chariot-wheels." There was precious grain, for the world's nutrition, in that first-ripe Paschal sheaf.

Obs. 2. Ephraim's probation had been shorter, and in some respects slighter, than Judah's.—The "living Bread" (John vi. 35) was to come out of Judah.

Obs. 3. The LXX. paraphrases *v.* 28 thus: "For I will not be angry with you for ever, neither shall the voice of my bitterness trample you down."

29. *This also cometh*] Or, "came forth." This practical wisdom of the husbandman (see on *v.* 26). It came from Him; and is an illustration of His own method of working.

He *is wonderful in counsel*] Or, "in His plan." His government of the world combines the minutest attention to detail with an all-comprehending unity of design. (The words are cognate to those used in ix. 6: "Wonderful; Counsellor.")

excellent in working] Or, "in act." He has surpassing wealth of resources to carry into effect what He has designed.

The words, which are here rendered "counsel" and "working," are coupled in Prov. viii. 14; "*Counsel* is mine and *sound wisdom*" (or, effectual working);—corresponding to "understanding," and "strength" (or, might) in the second half of the verse.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 6.)

The following facts are in favour of the Masoretic punctuation:—

1. It gives due prominence to the "spirit of judgment;" which can then be taken as in iv. 4, where it refers to a work performed on *all* the citizens of the purified Zion.

2. It is free from the serious difficulty of having to supply a preposition before מִשְׁפָּט.

3. It produces an equilibrium between the portions of *vv.* 5, 6;—

"In that day shall the Lord of Hosts be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty
"To the residue of His people;
"For a spirit of judgment also,
"To him that sitteth upon the judgment, and to the mighty who turn back war at the gate."

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 11.)

The meaning of לְעֵג is elsewhere that of laughing, or deriding. See, for instance, the verb in xxxvii. 22; Ps. ii. 4; Job xi. 3; 2 Chro. xxx. 10; and the noun in Ps. cxxiii. 4; Ezek. xxiii. 32; Job xxxiv. 7.

Cp. the עֶלֶג of xxxii. 4 (and see the note there).

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *God's heavy judgment upon Jerusalem.* 7 *The unsatiableness of her enemies.* 9 *The senselessness,* 13 *and deep hypocrisy of the Jews.* 18 *A promise of sanctification to the godly.*

‖ Or, *O Ariel*, that is, *the lion of God.* ‖ Or, *of the city.*

‖ WOE to Ariel, to Ariel, ‖ the city *where* David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them † kill sacrifices. † Heb. *cut off the heads.*

2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel.

3 And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against

CHAP. XXIX. The "sure foundation" has been laid in Zion (xxviii. 16). Therefore all who fight against Zion shall be overthrown (be they Jew or Gentile).

The assault made by this vast army of enemies upon Ariel is an instance of what the parable in xxviii. 24—29 spoke of. It was "from (with) the Lord of Hosts" (*v.* 6; cp. xxviii. 29, *s. w.*), to thresh out a portion of good seed, that should be sown afresh and bear precious fruit (xxxvii. 31, 32).

The analysis of the chapter appears to be as follows:—

1. In *vv.* 1—6 the prophet paints the humiliation of literal Zion in the presence of her enemies; and then in *v.* 7 passes suddenly to the overthrow of those enemies (whoever they may be).

2. In *vv.* 9—17 he tells the worldly Jews that *they* must be punished as God's enemies.

3. In *vv.* 18—24 he shews what the effect of this punishment would be. The chaff would be scattered away, and the true Israel come forth to view.

1. *Woe to* (or, Alas for) *Ariel*] It is agreed that Ariel is a symbolic name for Jerusalem, though the exact meaning of the word is doubtful. It is rendered by Aq. and Symm. (Gesen., Ew., &c.), "Lion of God;" but in 2 S. xxiii. 20 the word appears to denote "a lion" (or, "lion-like man") simply.

The Targ. (followed by most Jewish authorities, by Del., Knob., Hendn., &c.) takes it to refer to "the altar" (of burnt-offering); the word being similar to one used of the altar in Ezek. xliii. 15, 16. (See Note A.) So understood, the name would imply the truth which is explicitly stated in xxxi. 9: "The Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem." His altar-fire was perpetually maintained there (Lev. vi. 12, 13).

where David dwelt] Or, **camped** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 3). The LXX. and Vulg. took it as, "against which David encamped."

Zion was captured by David immediately after he was anointed king over Israel (2 S. v. 1—9). When the Jebusites refused to surrender the city to him (2 S. v. 6), he took it by storm, and made it his chief fortress.

Zion had now fallen back into its heathen state. Scornful Jebusites occupied it, who dreamt that their "blind and lame" projects (cp. 2 S. v. 6—9; ch. xxxv. 5, 6) were sufficient to keep away the heir of David (ix. 7) from reigning over them. So HE must encamp against them (*v.* 3). (Cp. on ch. xxviii. 21.)

add ye **on** *year to year*]—though it be only "adding on sin to sin" (xxx. 1, *s. w.*).

let them kill...] Rather,—**let the feasts run their round** (cp. Exod. xxxiv. 17—22); though they be but a routine of formal observances, of "lame and blind" sacrifices (Deut. xv. 21; Mal. i. 8), such as "My soul hateth" (i. 14; Amos v. 21; cp. 2 S. v. 8).

2. *Yet...*] Or, **And** (in due time) *I will distress* (*v.* 7) *Ariel; and* **she** *shall be* **la-**

thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.

4 And thou shalt be brought down, *and* shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall † whisper out of the dust.

† Heb. *peep*, or, *chirp*.

5 Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones *shall be* as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

6 Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

7 ¶ And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.

8 It shall even be as when an hungry *man* dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, *he is* faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

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mentation *and* **grief, yea, she** *shall be to me* **a very** *Ariel*,—a real altar-hearth, on which, alas! how many thousands of holocausts will be consumed!

The nouns here rendered "lamentation and grief" occur again in Lam. ii. 5 (and *there only*). Doubtless the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was a primary fulfilment of this prophecy. The verb for "distress" is used three times in the warning address of Moses, Deut. xxviii. 53, 55, 57;—verses which had a fulfilment alike in the siege of Samaria (2 K. vi. 29) and in the Babylonian and Roman sieges of Jerusalem (Lam. iv. 10; Ezek. v. 10; Joseph. 'J. W.' VI. 3).

3. *with a mount*] Or, *with* **palisade**; LXX. χάρακα (*s. w. a.* Luke xix. 43, where also note the περικυκλώσουσι). The Targ. uses the Greek word χαράκωμα. It seems doubtful whether this could apply literally to Sennacherib's attempt on Jerusalem (xxxvii. 33).

4. *brought down...be low*] *s. w. a.* ii. 11.

whisper] *s. w. a.* viii. 19 ("chirp"). She that had dealt in necromancy, should now give forth moans, as feeble as those which the necromancer seemed to elicit from the ground.

5. *Moreover*] Better, **And**; for a comparison of *vv.* 4, 6, shews that *v.* 5 must still relate to the humiliation of Jerusalem. It was *her* collapse that was to take place "at an instant suddenly" (see xxx. 13). This alone gives its proper force to the expression "thy strangers;"—those strangers whom thou hast chosen to follow (see Jer. ii. 25; cp. Prov. v. 10). That prostration of Jerusalem should liberate her from the alien "lords" (xxvi. 13) who had tyrannized over her.

strangers...terrible ones] *s. w. a.* xxv. 3—5.

6. *shalt be visited*] Cp. Exod. xxxii. 34. This can refer only to "Ariel."

of the LORD] Lit. "from with the Lord," as in xxviii. 22. The desolating storm is *His* work; and He is "wonderful in counsel;" bringing low in order that He may rescue from the worst of oppressors. When that work is accomplished (x. 12), the dark thunder-cloud shall pass away.

Sir E. Strachey observes ('Sargon,' p. 252): "The enemies of the Lord shall be consumed on the hearth of His altar:—first, His spiritual enemies among the Jews themselves, but afterwards the heathen oppressors of His people."

flame of devouring fire] *s. w. a.* xxx. 30.

7. The best concerted plans of the Church's enemies,—Egypt or Babylon, faithless Israel or the foes "on high" (xxiv. 21),—shall become as the illusions of a night vision.

even all that fight against her and her munition] Or, "and all her fighting men, and her fortress, and they that distress her" (namely, from within; cp. xlix. 17).

The word here rendered "munition" (or, "fortress") closely resembles the one which is used of "*the stronghold* of Zion" in 2 S. v. 7, 9, 1 Chro. xi. 5; but it occurs elsewhere only in Eccl. ix. 12 ("net") and Ezek. xix. 9 ("holds:" but cp. also Ezek. xii. 13, xvii. 20). Both in the Babylonian and Roman wars, the overweening confidence, which the Jews placed in their strong city and their fortress temple (neglecting their true Fortress, Ps. xviii. 2, xxxi. 3), was the main cause of their ruin. In the Roman siege, undoubtedly, Jerusalem was far more "distressed" by her defenders than by the enemy.

8. *hungry...thirsty*] Cp. xxxii. 6, xli. 17, xliv. 3, lv. 1, 2, lxv. 13. (For a lively illustration of the figure here employed, see Note B.)

against mount Zion] On which the Lord's King has been enthroned (Ps. ii. 6).

9 ¶ Stay yourselves, and wonder; ‖ cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.

‖ Or, *take your pleasure, and riot.*

10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your † rulers, the seers hath he covered.

† Heb. *heads.*

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a ‖ book that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed:

‖ Or, *letter.*

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

13 ¶ Wherefore the Lord said, [a] Forasmuch as this people draw near *me*, with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

[a] Matth. 15. 8. Mark 7. 6.

14 Therefore, behold, † I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: [b] for the wisdom of

† Heb. *I will add.*
[b] Jer. 49. 7. Obad. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 19.

The "Sure Foundation" (xxviii. 16) remains; all who oppose it shall disappear. Babylon's dream of universal dominion, Jerusalem's dream of a golden age, would vanish. Only in one resting-place could the weary soul find refreshment (xxviii. 12).

9. The preceding eight verses contained "a report," which might well have made men tremble. But they do not understand it. They listen for awhile with stolid wonderment, and then return to their mirth.

Stay yourselves] Or, **Linger ye on**—as Lot did, when the angel bade him escape for his life (Gen. xix. 16, *s.w.*). That hesitancy must soon be exchanged for astonished surprise (xiii. 8, *s.w.*). Cp. Hab. i. 5.

cry ye out] Or, "take your pleasure (so marg.), and cry aloud." Turn to your thoughtless amusement; "play (xi. 8, *s.w.*) on the hole of the asp," not yet free from venom:—before long your shouting will be of a different kind; like the piercing "cry" that was heard ringing against the mountains of "the valley of vision" (xxii. 5, *s.w.*).

not with wine]—but with the "wormwood" (Deut. xxix. 18) of infidelity; so that they put aside the prophet's warning, and said, "I shall have peace; for I will walk in the stubbornness of my own heart" (ib. *v.* 19). Cp. the last note on xxx. 1.

Obs. In Rom. xi. 8 St Paul unites Isai. xxix. 10 with Deut. xxix. 4, as if he saw in Isaiah's words a reference to Deuteronomy.

10. *poured out upon you*] Or, "spread over you." (Cp. xxv. 7, xxx. 1, *s.w.*)

your rulers] Lit. *your* **heads**, *the seers*; eyeless heads, blind seers. (Mic. iii. 6, 7.)

hath he covered] as with a veil (cp. 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15).

11, 12. *the vision of all*] Or, *the vision* **throughout**, in its entire range.

of a book that is sealed] Or, **of the sealed book**. All the Greek versions have, "*this* sealed book." Cp. viii. 16.

They had rejected the prophecy concerning "Immanuel." That was the reason why the teachers found the prophet's words to be impenetrable enigmas, while the people at large professed themselves unable to judge of such matters.

13. *Forasmuch as...Therefore*] A solemn judicial formula (viii. 6, xxx. 12; 1 K. xiv. 7—10; Jer. vii. 13, 14, xxiii. 38, 39).

draw near (me) *with their mouth*] So the versions generally. The Masoretic punctuation divides the clauses thus: "Forasmuch as this people hath drawn near;—with their mouth and their lips have they honoured Me, but...." The grammar seems to require this division; since, if there had been three co-ordinate clauses, "unto Me" could scarcely have been dispensed with after "draw near."

Obs. 1. Israel at Sinai undertook to do "all that the Lord had said" (Exod. xxiv. 7); and within seven weeks they had made a golden calf,—professedly to hold "*a feast unto the Lord*" (Exod. xxxii. 5). Their short-lived "fear of God" (Exod. xx. 20) degenerated into "a commandment of men, learnt by rote;" known as a lesson, but not rooted in principle, and therefore soon yielding before the flimsiest pretexts. It was not otherwise now, when Isaiah told them of the "sure Foundation" laid in Zion. They drew near, and heard, and waxed all the bolder to go and concert an Egyptian alliance (cp. xxx. 1, 2).

Obs. 2. Long after idolatry had ceased, they equally evaded the spirit of the Divine Law by overlaying it with frivolous comments or casuistical explanations (see Matt. xv. 8, 9; Mark vii. 6, 7).

14. *behold, I will proceed*] Lit. (cp. xxviii. 16), "Behold, I am He that will add" (*s. w. a.* xxxviii. 5). All along, Israel's history had

their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid.

15 Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, [c] Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the [d] work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

17 *Is* it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?

18 ¶ And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

19 The meek also [f] shall increase

[c] Ecclus. 23. 18.

[d] chap. 45. 9.

[f] Heb. *shall add.*

been of a marvellous character. It should be so now more than ever.

to do a marvellous work] (*s. w. a.* xxviii. 29). The word was one that had solemn memories connected with it; having been used in Deut. xxviii. 58, 59: "If thou wilt not observe...to fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God, then the Lord *will make* thy plagues *wonderful:*" cp. Exod. xxxiv. 10; Lam. i. 9.

the wisdom...] Their politic contrivances for maintaining Judah's national existence (cp. xxxi. 1, 2, John xi. 48), and their whole method of reasoning about divine things (see 1 Cor. i. 19). Cp. Jer. viii. 8, 9, 10.

shall be hid] Lit. "shall hide itself away:" its own subtleties (*v.* 15) bringing defeat upon it.

The LXX. here (quoted in 1 Cor. i. 19) has σοφῶν...συνετῶν. Cp. Matt. xi. 25.

15. *that seek deep to hide...*] More nearly, *that* **go deeply away from the Lord** *to hide counsel* (cp. xxxi. 6; Hos. v. 2; *s. w.*);—not believing in the incomparably greater profundity of God's wisdom (cp. vii. 11).

16. *Surely...clay*] Rather, **Your perversion!** (cp. Deut. xxxii. 20;) **shall the potter be reckoned as** (xl. 15) *clay?* They altogether *inverted* the relation of the creature and the Creator (cp. x. 15).—Are you, then, the moulders of your own national privileges? Is the favour of God, pledged to you by His covenant, to be the material out of which you shall build up your self-aggrandizing schemes? Does God's omnipotence need your skill to manipulate it into form?

for shall...] Rather, *for* **the work saith...** *me not;* **yea,** *the thing framed* **hath said...***no understanding.* Israel, in its reluctance to trust God and its anxiety to work out its own projects, acted as if He, who gave it being (Ps. xcv. 6, c. 3), were destitute of that intelligence on which it so complacently relied.

17. They had inverted the true order of things, attributing to themselves what came from God alone. How soon could He shew them their error! *Yet a very little while, and Lebanon,* the lofty mountain which dominates Canaan, adorned with magnificent cedar-groves, *shall be turned* [lit. return] *into* **Carmel**—humbled in order that it may become fruitful; like the low range of Carmel, covered with vines and olives, and abounding in rich pasturage: whilst Carmel, in its turn, which has but a few scattered trees ("like an English park," says Dr Porter), *shall be* **reckoned** *as a forest,* for the dignity which shall then be conferred upon it.

Such appears to be the simplest view of the meaning of this verse; which, like xxxii. 15, has plainly an allegorical meaning.

It has been referred, in ancient times (Jerome, Cyril Alex., and Theodoret), as well as modern (Forer., Vitr.), to the interchange of the relative positions of Jew and Gentile (cp. Rom. xi. 12, 15; Judg. vi. 36—40). It seems more in accordance both with the immediate context and with the whole tenor of the prophecy to refer it to God's act "in abasing the high and exalting the low" (Ezek. xxi. 26, cp. xvii. 24),—whether in Israel or among Gentile races. Cp. ii. 11—17, v. 13—17; x. 12—19, 33, 34, xiii. 11.

Obs. 1. Jerusalem, as the metropolis, and "*the king's house of Judah*" in especial, are sometimes referred to under the image of Lebanon;—probably, with allusion to "the house of the forest of Lebanon" (1 K. vii. 2; cp. ch. xxii. 8) built by Solomon. See Jer. xxii. 6, 20, 23; and compare ch. xxxvii. 23, 24; Ezek. xx. 46.

Obs. 2. Lebanon and Carmel are both mentioned in xxxiii. 9, xxxv. 2, xxxvii. 24; Ezek. xvii. 3—5. Cp. on x. 18.

18. *the deaf*] They shall have their spiritual hearing restored, and shall understand the "words of the book," which had become "a sealed book" (*v.* 11). Cp. lii. 15.

the blind] Cp. Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

out of obscurity...] Cp. xlii. 7, xlix. 9.

19. *The meek*] whether of Jew or Gentile. The extension of the Church among the Gentile races will not exclude the pious Jew from having his share in the gladness of God's people:—a higher gladness than of old. (The

their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

20 For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off:

21 That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

23 But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

24 They also that erred in spirit † shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

† Heb. *shall know understanding.*

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language of this verse closely resembles that of xli. 15.) ♭

the poor among men] Or, "of mankind." All who were conscious of their spiritual needs (cp. lxi. 1; Zeph. iii. 12; Matt. v. 3—5).

20. *the terrible one*] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 5; Ps. xxxvii. 35.

is brought to nought...consumed] The words are the same as in xvi. 4, "is at an end... ceaseth." (Cp. Ps. xxxvii. 38.)

the scorner] xxviii. 14, 22.

that watch for iniquity] that "keep awake" or "rise up early" for it; depriving themselves of sleep, until they effect their ungodly purposes.

21. *That make a man...*] Or, "That lead **men** (*adam*) into sin by words;"—lit. "by word;" supplying them with some plausible reason to excuse sin, or to tempt to sin. This is the ordinary meaning of the verb, which is used particularly of Jeroboam's seducing Israel to the worship of the calves (1 K. xv. 26; 2 K. xv. 9, 18, 23, 28 and especially xvii. 21—23). This he did by means of a bold, cunningly devised pretext, 1 K. xii. 28 (cp. xiii. 34). Compare ch. xxxi. 6, 7.

They led the common people into sin, and endeavoured to *lay a snare*, to catch and ruin, any who stood up *in the gate* (where public assemblies were) to speak on behalf of right or to denounce wrong. The phrase occurs in Amos v. 10 (of Samaria).

turn aside...] Or, "pervert (the cause of) the just man by falsehood,"—on groundless allegations. Cp. Amos v. 12; "They afflict the just, they take a tribe, and they *turn aside* (*s. w.*) the poor in the gate (*from their right*)." In ch. x. 2 the ellipsis is supplied.

22. *Therefore*]—to confirm the promise just given. The order of the following words is, in the Hebrew, "Thus saith the Lord unto the house of Jacob,—He that redeemed Abraham." He who at first separated Abraham from the mass of the Gentile world (cp. li. 1, 2), and trained him to be the "father of the faithful," He will not leave His work incomplete. Jacob's sons have sinned (as of old, Gen. xxxiv. 30, xxxv. 22, xxxvii. 2) so as to make their father "turn pale" with shame and alarm; yet they shall be brought to penitence (as of old, Gen. l. 17, 18) through a course of severe discipline, and "fill the face of the earth with fruit" (xxvii. 6).

23. *when he seeth his children*]—his long-lost children, now all restored to him (cp. Gen. xlvi. 30, xlviii. 11).

the work of mine hands] xlv. 11, lx. 21: "created anew unto good works," as Abraham was, "through faith," Eph. ii. 10; Gal. vi. 15, 16.—This is one of the fundamental ideas of Part II.

in the midst of him]—truly incorporated into the family of faith.

they shall sanctify my name] That name which was "laid upon them" (Num. vi. 27), which they had caused to be blasphemed (ch. lii. 5).

and sanctify] Rather, **they shall even** *sanctify...and shall* **dread**:—resuming the two verbs used in viii. 12 (the latter of the two occurring in its Hifil form *only* in viii. 12, 13 and xxix. 23).

Obs. 1. The adjective derived from this verb was used in *v.* 20 of the "terrible" oppressor.—*He* had disappeared. The only object of dread now was the Holy One. (Cp. Rev. xv. 4.)

Obs. 2. The word for children is used in viii. 18. That little flock, whose members were once as "portents" to carnal Israel, had grown into the Catholic Church, the "Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16).

24. *They also that erred in spirit*] The same verb as in xxviii. 7. The phrase closely resembles that in Ps. xcv. 10, "(a people) that do err in their heart;"—wandering back in longing desire to Egypt. So it was now with Israel (xxx. 1).

That there is a reference here to the generation, of whom God "sware in His wrath

that they should not enter into His rest" (Ps. xcv. 11), is shewn by the word rendered *they that murmured*. It occurs elsewhere *only* in Deut. i. 27 and Ps. cvi. 25 (the latter passage being almost a quotation from Deuteronomy).

In every generation God's voice had pointed out the way to *rest*. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice—"(Ps. xcv. 7), it said, "This is the rest" (ch. xxviii. 12). But men would not *know understanding*, or, recognize the true verdicts of their own conscience;—neither would they "learn doctrine," though it fell upon them with the freshness of dew (Deut. xxxii. 2, *s. qu.*).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 1.) "ARIEL."

1. The Targum renders "Ariel" by "the altar;" influenced, doubtless, by Ezek. xliii. 15, 16. Accordingly, many have referred to the Arabic *ireh*, "a hearth," as giving the first element of the name, Ariel. No trace of such a word exists in Hebrew.

In Ezekiel the two names given to the temple-altar are הראל and אראיל. The former means "Mount of God:"—the second may mean "I will provide (or, shew) a ram." Both these would find their explanation in the typical offering of Isaac on Moriah, the "mount of the Lord" (Gen. xxii. 14), and the provision of a *substitute for him* in the ram (*ib.* 8, 13). The temple stood near (if not upon) the locality, on which Abraham built his altar; near (if not upon) the spot, where David offered the sacrifices that were taken as a *substitute for Jerusalem* (2 S. xxiv. 16, 25). It seems probable, therefore, that the *Har-El* and *Ar-ayil* of Ezekiel are variations, and not precise equivalents, of Isaiah's *Ariel*.

2. For the explanation of the last we must go to the chapter which precedes the one just referred to (see 2 S. xxiii. 20, the only other place where the word occurs). It there denotes a species of "lion." Jerusalem, as the chief representative of the tribe of Judah (symbolized by the lion, Gen. xlix. 9), might well bear that title. But the royal city was no longer of kingly character. It had become degraded: "My inheritance has become unto Me" (said God) "as a lion in the forest; it roareth out against Me; therefore have I hated it" (Jer. xii. 8). It is a savage creature that must be surrounded and captured. The language employed by Jeremiah resembles that of Isaiah so strongly as to suggest the idea of its being a comment: especially as the next verse (Jer. xii. 9) looks back to Isai. lvi. 9.

וְהָיְתָה לִּי כַּאֲרִיאֵל (Isai. xxix. 2)

הָיְתָה לִּי כְּאַרְיֵה בַּיָּעַר (Jer. xii. 8)

Yet, as it was with Isaac, and with Jerusalem, so shall it be with Ariel:—it shall be rescued when escape seems hopeless. The true "Lion of the tribe of Judah" will interpose,—and Himself become the Lamb (liii. 7) which shall bear the stroke of Eternal Justice.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 8.)

Dr Alexander quotes the following from Mungo Park's Journals: "No sooner had I shut my eyes than fancy would convey me to the streams and rivers of my native land. There, as I wandered along the verdant bank, I surveyed the clear stream with transport, and hastened to swallow the delightful draught; but, alas! disappointment awaked me, and I found myself a lonely captive, perishing of thirst, amid the wilds of Africa."

So, in their captivity, the Jews continued to dream of the glory of a worldly Messiah's kingdom;—only to be perpetually disappointed.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *The prophet threateneth the people for their confidence in Egypt,* 8 *and contempt of God's word.* 18 *God's mercies towards his church.* 27 *God's wrath, and the people's joy, in the destruction of Assyria.*

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take

CHAP. XXX. Though there is no ground for supposing that Rabshakeh's taunting imputation on Hezekiah was true ("Thou trustest on Egypt," xxxvi. 6),—though it is evident, on Rabshakeh's own shewing (xxxvi. 15, 18), that the charge was false,—yet it is probable that there were some leading persons in Jerusalem, who advocated an Egyptian alliance.

All that we know for certain, however, is that the northern kingdom concluded an alliance with So, king of Egypt; and that this alliance was the occasion of Samaria's downfall (2 K. xvii. 4). Egyptian faithlessness or imbecility brought about the ruin of the state, which from the first had made Egyptian Apis-worship the corner-stone of its policy.

The first seven verses of this chapter may

counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion.

4 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

5 They were all ashamed of a people *that* could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

6 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence *come* the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people *that* shall not profit *them*.

7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore

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(as Rashi suggests) relate specially to Ephraim; a transition taking place at *v.* 8 to the people at large.

1. *Woe to...*] Or, "Ah (i. 4) rebellious children" (cp. *v.* 9);—who have been so often corrected by a father's loving hand, and yet continue refractory.

Obs. The same word is used of the incorrigible son in Deut. xxi. 18, 20 (cp. i. 23; Ps. lxxviii. 8; Hos. iv. 16; *s. w.*).

that take counsel] Or, "that frame purposes" (cp. Deut. xxxi. 21, *s. w.*;—A. V. "go about"). The material, out of which they shape their plans, is created by their own fancy,—*not* derived from God.

that cover with...] Or, "spread out a covering" (*s. w. a.* xxv. 7). But since the noun (*massekah*) is used in *v.* 22 (as in xlii. 17; Exod. xxxii. 4, &c.; 2 K. xvii. 16) of an image; and the verb is used in xl. 19, xliv. 10 of "pouring out" an image (or, perhaps, *over-laying* it with a coating of metal), it may be better to render, "that form a molten image."

but not of my spirit] They have shaped their plan,—the creature of their own imagination: and have poured out over it of their own worldly, self-confident, spirit (cp. xxix. 10);—instead of asking Me to grant them *My Spirit*. The result is, they are trusting in a lifeless idol.

Obs. So they were reproducing that first great sin of Israel, when the people said that the "molten calf," which they had manufactured, had "brought them up out of Egypt" (Exod. xxxii. 4). Note the resemblance (1) between *v.* 11, "turn ye aside out of the way," and Exod. xxxii. 8, "They have soon *turned aside out of the way* (*s. w.*):" and (2) between *v.* 22, "thou shalt scatter" the coating of "the molten image of gold," and Exod. xxxii. 20: Moses burned the golden calf, and ground it to powder, and *scattered it* (*s. w.*) upon the water.

may add on (xxix. 1, *s. w.*) *sin to sin*] in unbroken continuity: stopping the workings of remorse by fresh intoxicating draughts of self-conceit (cp. Deut. xxix. 19, H. 18).

2. *That walk to...*] Or, "that are on their way down to E.;" as if Hoshea's envoys (2 K. xvii. 4) were now journeying thither.

in the strength] Or, "stronghold:"—Pharaoh himself being the fortress in which they sought shelter (*s. w. a.* xxv. 4; Ps. xxvii. 1).

in the shadow] As though Egypt were God; xxv. 4; Ps. xxxvi. 8, lvii. 2.

4. The prophet's eye follows the envoys on their way, and sees them reach Zoan (xix. 11);—*his princes* are now *in Zoan*—the scene of so many wondrous works (Ps. lxxviii. 12) wrought for Israel's deliverance. But they have forgotten that display of divine power, and gaze only on the grandeur of the imperial city.

came to...] Or, "will reach Hanes;" probably, *Ehnes* in Middle Egypt; identified by many with the Anysis of Herodotus (II. 137).

5. *They were...*] Or, "Every one is ashamed." Egypt gives them promises, but no substantial help; while the alliance brings down on Israel the anger of Assyria.

6. To stamp the futility of their mission more plainly, it is now represented in a short, but vivid, "burden" (LXX. ἡ ὅρασις).

of the beasts of the south] Or, South country; the Negeb (xxi. 1). The "beasts" are the asses and camels that are carrying the envoys and their presents, through a *land of trouble*, the Egyptian desert (Deut. viii. 15; Jer. ii. 6). God had once conducted Israel through that desert: they are now undoing His work;—seeking the friendship of the proud nation from which He had delivered them.

fiery flying serpent] See on xiv. 29.

7. *For the Egyptians...*] Or, "As for Egypt—vain and empty will be the help they

‖ Or, *to her.* have I cried ‖ concerning this, Their strength *is* to sit still.

8 ¶ Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that † Heb. *the latter day.* it may be for † the time to come for ever and ever:

9 That this *is* a rebellious people, lying children, children *that* will not hear the law of the LORD:

10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in ‖ oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: ‖ Or, *fraud.*

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be

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give." It will be a hollow semblance; ruinous, really, to those who lean on it (cp. xxxi. 3, lvii. 13). In the summary of Israel's misdoings, which follows the notice of Samaria's capture, it is remarked (2 K. xvii. 15), that "they *went after vanity* (*s. w.*) and *were made vanity*." So too was it, at a later date, with Judah, Lam. iv. 17: "Evermore did our eyes waste away (looking) for our *vain help* (*s. w.*), ...for a nation that could not save."

therefore have I...] To warn men against trusting in this vanity, I have put forth an oracular sentence, which sums up the whole matter: "(very) Rahab are they; desist."

Rahab, the name given to Egypt in li. 9, Ps. lxxxvii. 4, lxxxix. 10, means "arrogance," supercilious pride (Symm. ἀλαζονεία). The pronoun is emphatic. *They*, whose favour you are so laboriously endeavouring to win,—*they* are true children of that haughty realm, which scorned your fathers and will scorn you; which the God of your fathers once laid low, and is even now again laying low. THEY are—what Rahab has always been—vaunting and vain. "*Cease!*" (lit. "cessation," Prov. xx. 3);—*desist* from that fruitless toil; *rest* from labours that will bring no profit.

Vulg. "Superbia tantum est; quiesce."

Rashi (followed by many moderns) makes the whole refer to Egypt: "They are haughty in spirit: but are an idle people, given to vain boasting."

8. *write it before them...*] Rather, "write it on a tablet **to be with them.**" My law, written out on tablets, they have despised. Go, write this brief protest against their idolatry of human power and policy. Let it remain for ever with them, as a fresh Deuteronomy,—a republication of the warnings of the Song of Moses. (Cp. Hab. ii. 2.)

that it may be for the time to come] Or (marg.), **for the latter day.** In a very short time, the oracle was proved true by the arrival of the "supremus dies" of Samaria. Later on it was verified in the two visitations on Jerusalem. It lives on till "the latter day."

9. *That this is*] Rather, **For** *this is.* So in Deut. xxxi. 26, 27: "This book of the law...shall be there among thee for a witness. FOR *I know thy rebelliousness* (*s. w.*)." Cp. also iii. 8; Deut. xxxii. 20; Ezek. ii. 3 ff.

lying children] That make high professions, but are untrue to their promise (lix. 13, *s. w.*).

10. *seers...prophets*] The latter noun is also rendered "seer" (2 S. xxiv. 11; 2 K. xvii. 13; 1 Chro. xxix. 29,—where both the words occur). It is from the verb used in i. 1, ii. 1; while the former of the nouns is from the verb used in vi. 1.

right things] Things as they truly are,—honestly represented (*s. w. a.* xxvi. 10).

prophesy deceits] Lit. "see illusions;"—give us soothing visions, that will cozen away those alarming words of God's law. Cp. the verb in xliv. 20 ("a deceived," *deluded*, "heart"), Jer. ix. 5, H. 4. LXX. "report to us another delusion (πλάνησιν)."

11. *Get you out of the way*]—the way marked out of old by God; the "old paths" (Jer. vi. 16). One of the fundamental rules laid down for Israel when they came out of Egypt was, that they were "to return no more *that way*" (Deut. xvii. 16). They were bent on doing so.

Obs. The same words are used in Exod. xxxii. 8; Deut. ix. 12: cp. ix. 16.

to cease from before us] Once they had challenged Him to "draw near and come" (v. 19). Now His work has overtaken them. It meets them at every turn;—in outward events, and in Isaiah's ever-renewed warnings. They cannot endure this. They say, "Do not keep obtruding that frightful name upon us. Remove Him away. Make Him cease from working, from speaking."

12. *ye despise*] Or, **reject** (see on v. 24, vii. 15, *s. w.*). Cp. 2 K. xvii. 15, 20 (*s. w.*).

this word] The prohibition to go down to Egypt.

trust in oppression] *s. w. a.* Ps. lxii. 10, H. 11. Both here and in lix. 13 this "oppression" is introduced as a consequence (if not an element) of irreligion. When once men had given up their faith in God, the maintenance of the state was their one supreme end.

to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

14 And he shall break it as the breaking of † the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water *withal* out of the pit.

† Heb. *the bottle of potters.*

15 For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

17 One thousand *shall flee* at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as ‖ a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.

‖ Or, *a tree bereft of branches,* or, *boughs:* or, *a mast.*

18 ¶ And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD *is* a God of judgment: [a] blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

[a] Psal. 2. 12. & 34. 8. Prov. 16. 20. Jer. 17. 7.

Whatever seemed likely to secure that was held to be lawful: for instance, heavy taxation (so Del.) for the purpose of providing the gifts which were carried by "the beasts of the South" into Egypt. Cp. 2 K. xv. 20.

perverseness]—tortuous policy. Such was Hoshea's secret negotiating with So.

and stay] Or, **stay you** (xxxi. 1, xxxvi. 6; *s. w.*).

13. The political fabric, no longer resting on the foundations of truth and right, was beginning to sink. Already there was a portion of the wall giving way:—*a breach* (or, broken portion) *swelling* (or, bulging) *out in* that **lofty** (xxvi. 5, *s. w.*) *wall.* When once it was deflected from the perpendicular, its towering elevation only added to the danger.

Obs. The expression *lofty wall* (as of a fortress, cp. xxv. 12) occurs in Prov. xviii. 11: "A rich man's wealth is HIS strong city, and as *a lofty wall* in his own conceit." It is added (*v.* 12), "Before destruction (or, a breach, *s. w.*) the heart of man is haughty."

14. *And he shall...*] Or, "And **one** shall break it as an earthenware bottle is broken, **beating it in pieces** without pity; **and not** a sherd shall be found **among the pieces thereof.**" (Cp. Ezek. vii. 4, 9.)

15. *In returning and rest*] In retracing your steps (x. 20, 21, xxi. 12), and settling down in your own true resting-place (xxviii. 12). This is the expansion of the oracular "Desist" in *v.* 7.

in quietness] and tranquillity of soul, *s. w. a.* in vii. 4.

your strength] Your best military equipment (*s. w. a.* xxviii. 6, xxxvi. 5).

Obs. Rabshakeh's taunting words shew that Hezekiah had profited by this teaching (xxxvi. 4); "What is *this confidence*, wherewith thou art confident?" (Cp. 5, 6, 7.)

16. *we will flee upon horses*] They insisted on having horses from Egypt (xxxi. 1), to carry them in case of need to some stronghold:—they should have occasion to use them in that way (Deut. xxviii. 25). Cp. Hos. xiv. 3.

17. The blessing pronounced in Lev. xxvi. 8 should now be reversed (cp. Deut. xxxii. 30). There would be a mighty *rebuke*, putting them to flight;—uttered, perhaps, by the lips of "one," or of "five," of their fellow-men; but really proceeding from the Holy One;—"the rebuke of" their "God" (li. 20; cp. l. 2, lxvi. 15; Ps. lxxx. 16).

as a beacon] A naked mast, instead of the lofty cedars of Lebanon;—a solitary beacon, yet visible to the world; standing like a landmark,—by help of which nations may steer their course aright, so as to escape the quicksands of ungodliness and infidelity.

18. *And therefore*]—because your sins require this chastisement—*the Lord will wait*, in resolute self-withdrawal, looking for the time when your penitence will permit Him to be again *gracious unto you: and therefore will He be exalted*, in judicial severity (v. 16; Ps. xlvi. 10), *that* ("when He seeth thy power is gone," Deut. xxxii. 36) *He may have mercy on thee* (Deut. xxx. 3).

a God of judgment] (Mal. ii. 17)—who will not let His children go uncorrected, yet will order His chastisement with never-failing equity; allowing mercy her full rights.

that wait for him]—though He "hide His face" (viii. 17, lxiv. 4).

This and the remainder of the chapter seem specially adapted to sustain the faithful men of Judah during the anxieties of the period which followed the fall of Samaria.

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.

20 And *though* the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of ‖ affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

‖ Or, *oppression.*

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

22 Ye shall defile also the covering of † thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt † cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

† Heb. *the graven images of thy silver.*
† Heb. *scatter.*

23 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat ‖ † clean provender, which hath

‖ Or, *savoury.*
† Heb. *leavened.*

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19. Though Ephraim's nationality be broken up, yet **a** *people shall dwell in Zion* (and that not only in Zion mystical, but literally), *in Jerusalem* (Ps. lxix. 35, 36.)

when he shall] Or, "**as soon as** He heard, He answered thee." See xxxvii. 21, xxxviii. 5. Cp. lxv. 24.

20. *And though...*] So most commentators; misled by a comparison of 1 K. xxii. 27. But the cases are not parallel. There Micaiah was put, in time of plenty, upon siege-rations. Here the people are thought of as suffering the extremity of a state of siege;—*weeping*, at the apparently inevitable necessity of capitulating to an inexorable enemy. To them this verse was a promise (so Del., Drechsl.); parallel (as Mr Birks notices) to *v.* 23 ("And He *shall give*"):—**And** *the Lord* **shall** *give you.* He will see that you have bread to sustain you in your adversity, and water in your affliction (cp. xxxiii. 16):—manna in the desert, water out of the flinty rock. The sequel of the verse suggests that there is an undertone of meaning in this promise:—He will supply thee with that supporting "bread" and "water," which were withdrawn in iii. 1.

yet shall not...] Or, **and** *thy* **teacher** *shall* **no more withdraw himself**;—whether by retiring into actual seclusion, or wrapping himself up in a veil of allegory. Isaiah himself appears to have lived in retirement (xxxvii. 2), and certainly clothed his message in dark sayings. But we are told in ii. 2 who the ultimate Teacher of the Church will be: "(the Lord) will teach us (*s. w.*) of His ways." (Cp. Ps. xxv. 7, 11; 1 K. viii. 36.) That this is the Teacher here spoken of, is plain from *v.* 21. Targ. "He will no more take away His Shekinah from the house of His sanctuary." Vulg. "doctorem tuum."

thine eyes shall see...] The veil taken away, thou wilt behold Him, no longer dimly revealed through the similitudes of the law and the enigmas of prophetic vision, but "manifested in flesh." (Cp. John i. 14, 18, 31.)

21. The Teacher will go before His flock, marking out the way for them,—And if at any time thou shouldst be drawn away from following Him (Num. xiv. 24; 2 K. xvii. 21), so that thou turn aside "to the right or to the left" (Deut. v. 32; Josh. i. 7), then His loving voice shall be heard recalling thee, saying, "This is the way;"—here, where thou seest My foot-prints (Ps. lxxxv. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 21).

22. The old objects of idolatry they should *defile* (as Josiah literally did, 2 K. xxiii. 8; cp. 2 Chro. xxxi. 1);—*the covering*, with which *the graven image* was overlaid; *the ornament* (or, coating) of the "molten image" (*massekah*, as in *v.* 1).

thou shalt cast them away...] Or, *shalt* **scatter** *them* (*s. w. a.* Exod. xxxii. 20) *as* **an unclean thing.** Cp. 2 K. xxiii. 6.

Get thee hence] Or, **Begone** (2 S. xvi. 7). The Babylonish captivity effected this change in the Jews thoroughly, as regards gross idol-worship. For their deliverance from subtler forms of idolatry, a higher purification was needed (Phil. iii. 8).

23. *Then...*] **And** *He shall give*—as was promised in Lev. xxvi. 4; Deut. xxviii. 12.

fat and plenteous] Or, **rich and fat.** Cp. xxv. 6, lv. 2; Ps. xxxvi. 8, lxiii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 25.

large pastures] Hebr. "a large pasture:"—as far exceeding that of former days as the Catholic Church does the Israelic.

24. *that ear* (or, plough) *the ground*] Rather, *that* **till** *the ground* (*s. w. a.* Gen. ii. 5, 15, iii. 23; Deut. xv. 19; Jer. xxvii. 11; Prov. xxviii. 19); an expression which implies (as does the second member of the verse) that the language is allegorical (cp. xxxii. 20).

clean provender] Or, **savoury** (as in

been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

25 And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every ‡ high hill, rivers *and* streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.

‡ Heb. *lifted up.*

26 Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning *with* his anger, ‖ and the burden *thereof is* † heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

‖ Or, *and the grievousness of flame.* † Heb. *heaviness.*

28 And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there*

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marg.); having acid vegetables and salt mixed with it. The word for "provender" is used of human food in Job xxiv. 6 (continuing the figure of *v.* 5, "as wild asses in the desert"). The word for "savoury" occurs here only; but is nearly identical with the Hebrew word for *leaven.*

Obs. Leavened bread was used in the "*sacrifice of thanksgiving*," Lev. vii. 13, and in the loaves of *first-fruits offered at* Pentecost (ib. xxiii. 17).

winnowed...] This fodder, made of grain carefully winnowed, suits only an allegorical passage.

25. The **lofty** *mountain* (*s. w. a.* xl. 9, lvii. 7), and *high hill* (*s. w. a.* ii. 14), and falling *towers*, carry us back to ch. ii. 12 f. That **streams** (*s. w. a.* xxxii. 2) and **water-courses** (*s. w. a.* xliv. 4; *not elsewhere*), should be found on them, implies that a great change had passed over them;—the very change spoken of in xl. 4, "Every mountain and hill shall be made low." The language is plainly allegorical.

Obs. In old time their rebellious pride had offered incense "on *every lofty hill*" (1 K. xiv. 23; 2 K. xvii. 10; Jer. ii. 20; *s. w.*). God's word would "cast down...every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. x. 5).

26. "All commentators," says Aben-Ezra, "except R. Moses Hakkohen, refer this verse to the time of Messiah."—Every part of nature shall then receive a wondrous accession of glory.

of seven days] Lit. "of the seven days." The meaning seems to be (as Drechsler gives it), that the whole amount of light, which is now dispersed over a week, shall be then concentrated into one single day.

bindeth up the breach] Or, "the bruise:" *s. w. a.* Jer. xxx. 12, vi. 14, viii. 11, 21, x. 19. Cp. ch. i. 6, iii. 7; Ps. cxlvii. 3.

healeth the stroke of their wound] Rather, *the* **wound** *of* **His stroke**; caused by His stroke. The same words are used in Deut. xxxii. 39, "I *wound*, and I *heal*." Cp. Hos. vi. 1.

27—33. We have here the same complex kind of picture as was given in xxix. 1—9. God's indignation advances first against His own people, and then is turned against their adversaries.

27. *the name of the* LORD]—for whose appearing the faithful had waited with "desire of soul" (xxvi. 8);—the name of Him who is a "God of judgment," yet "gracious and merciful" (*v.* 18; Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7).

cometh from far]—in the storm of invasion that was coming from distant Assyria (x. 3). Or, it was coming back from the distance and dimness, into which it had for some time receded. It will now display afresh its awful glory (Deut. xxviii. 58). The LXX. has διὰ χρόνου (*Al.* διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ). The Targ. "The name of the Lord shall be revealed as the prophets of old [cp. xxv. 1, nearly *s. w.*] prophesied concerning Him."

burning with....] Rather, *His anger* **burneth** (Ps. ii. 12, *s. w.*). Cp. xlii. 25.

and the burden thereof is heavy] Or, "even grievousness (xxi. 15, *s. w.*) of flame" (nearly as in marg.). His anger moves on like a vast, irresistible, mass of flame.

his lips] Cp. xi. 4.

as a devouring fire] *s. w. a.* Exod. xxiv. 17. For seven centuries that fire (typified in the altar-fire of the tabernacle) had been restrained under the self-limitations which Holy Love had laid on itself. Now at last the day of visitation has arrived (Exod. xxxii. 34).

28. *his breath*] Cp. xi. 4.

as an overflowing stream] See on viii. 8.

shall reach to the midst of the neck] Lit. "reaching to the neck *shall cut in twain*" (*s. w. a.* Ezek. xxxvii. 22). The nation was severed in two by the Assyrian invasion;—the body—the ten tribes—being thenceforward submerged, while the head, Judah, remained, beyond reach of the deluge.

with (or, **in**) *the sieve of vanity*] While they are moving to and fro in the execution

shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* to err.

29 Ye shall have a song, as in the night *when* a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the † mighty One of Israel.

† Heb. *Rock.*

† Heb. *the glory of his voice.*

30 And the LORD shall cause † his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of *his* anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire, *with* scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

31 For through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, *which* smote with a rod.

† Heb. *every passing of the rod founded.*

32 And † *in* every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the LORD shall † lay upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight ‖ with it.

† Heb. *cause to rest upon him.*

‖ Or, *against them.*

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of their own plans, which still come to nought, He is employing this restless agitation as a means of *sifting* them; separating "the precious from the vile." Cp. Amos ix. 9; Jer. xv. 7, 19.

and there shall be...] Or, *and a bridle that* **leadeth astray** (lxiii. 17, *s. w.*) **shall be** *on the* **cheeks** *of the* **peoples**; turning them aside ("like a horse or mule," Ps. xxxii. 9) from the objects they were aiming at.

So it was with Assyria, the proud warsteed, which, after subjugating half of Israel, had a heavy curb put in its mouth, turning it back from Judah (xxxvii. 29). So with Ephraim, the mule (half Israelite, half Egyptian); which, seeking to "go down" to ally itself with Egypt, was driven away by Assyria into the wilderness of the nations. Meantime penitent Judah has "a song" and "gladness of heart" (*v.* 29); for it is hidden in God's shelter, so that "the flood of great waters cannot come near it" (Ps. xxxii. 6).

29. Judah's deliverance shall be such as to recall the wonders of the Exodus. (Cp. xxxi. 5, xxvi. 20, xxxvi. 21.)

Ye shall have a song...] Or, "Your song shall be as in the night when the feast is kept holy;"—undoubtedly the passover-feast (Exod. xii. 14, 42). Hezekiah and his people had celebrated a passover; and the priests and Levites had "sanctified themselves holily" (2 Chro. xxxi. 18; cp. xxix. 5, 15, 34, xxx. 15, 24). They had honoured God; He would now honour them with a signal mark of His favour.—The paschal hymn (Ps. cxiii—cxviii) has many points of contact with these chapters of Isaiah: see *e.g.* xxvi. 2, xxviii. 16.

as when...to come] Or, **like his that marcheth to the flute to go.** It is said that each band of pilgrims on its way to Jerusalem was headed by a person who played the flute. (See, at large, in Vitringa.)

the mountain of the LORD] See on ii. 3.

to the mighty One] Lit. *to the* **Rock.** (Cp. on ii. 10; xxvi. 4.) There, "in the cleft of the rock," they might hear "the name of the Lord" (cp. *v.* 18 with Exod. xxxiv. 6), as it passed by, without terror.

30. *his glorious voice*] Lit. **the majesty of His voice**;—in its sovereignty of power (Ps. xxix. 4).

shall shew...] Or, *shall* **make** *the lighting down* (xxv. 10) *of* ***His*** *arm* **to be seen.**

with scattering] Cp. the verb in xxxiii. 3.

tempest] Or, *rain-storm* (xxv. 4).

hailstones (Josh. x. 11)] xxviii. 2 (of Samaria); xxviii. 17 (of Jerusalem; cp. xxxii. 19). Hail, with fire mingled in it, was one of the plagues sent upon Egypt (Exod. ix. 18—26).

31. *For through ... be beaten down*] Or, (since the verb is the same as in xxxi. 4, cp. 9;)—*For* **at** (or, because of) *the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian* **be dismayed.**

which smote with a rod] So the Targ. Cp. x. 24, xiv. 6. Or, "with the rod will He smite;"—as if it were designedly left indefinite. Samaria was first smitten: but the same Righteous Sceptre would lay its stroke on Assyria. Would it not smite *all* God's enemies (sinful Jerusalem included)?

32. *And in every place...*] Or, "And every passing (cp. xxviii. 15, 18) of the staff of **sure foundation** (xxviii. 16), which the Lord shall cause to rest upon him, shall be, &c." The "mighty staff," sent forth from Zion (Ps. cx. 2),—mightier by far than that which Moses lifted over the Red Sea (Exod. xiv. 16)—shall take effect on each enemy in succession, and be welcomed by the Church with jubilant anthems, like those which rose on the eastern shore of the Red Sea (Exod. xv. 20), or those which attended the ark on its way to Zion (2 S. vi. 5).

in battles of shaking] Hebr. *tenufah*, as in xix. 16. The waving of the Divine Hand shall throw the enemy's host into commotion;—as if turning it into one vast "wave-offering" (the common meaning of *tenufah;* see Lev. vii. 30).

will he fight with it] Lit. "hath He fought against her." The feminine pronoun can scarcely refer to "the Assyrian." The Masoretes, to avoid the difficulty, read in the marg. "with them;" but this does not prevent the

† Heb. *from yesterday.*

33 For Tophet *is* ordained † of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made *it* deep *and* large: the pile thereof *is* fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 *The prophet sheweth the cursed folly in trusting to Egypt, and forsaking of God.* 6 *He exhorteth to conversion.* 8 *He sheweth the fall of Assyria.*

WOE to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are* many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!

2 Yet he also *is* wise, and will bring evil, and will not † call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evildoers, and against the help of them that work iniquity.

† Heb. *remove.*

3 Now the Egyptians *are* men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the

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difficulty from recurring in the next verse; where we have (lit.) "*her* pile," and "kindleth upon *her*."

The explanation seems to be that the prophecy suddenly moves on to speak of Jerusalem. In favour of this it is to be noted:—

(1) That in lxiii. 10 we have the very words of the Keri, "He *fought against them*" (*s. w.*), used in reference to Israel.

(2) That in Jer. xix. 12, 13 we read: "I will *make this city as Tophet*. And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the places of Tophet;" —Tophet being thenceforth called "the valley of slaughter" (ib. 6; cp. *v.* 25 above).

(3) That we thus escape the necessity of making *v.* 33 refer to Sennacherib, whereas xxxi. 8 represents him as fleeing to his stronghold.

33. *For Tophet...*] Or, "For a place of burning is **made ready** (as an altar-hearth, Lev. i. 7) of old" (lit. "from yesterday").

The word rendered "Tophet" occurs here only; but is probably the common noun, from which "Tophet" was abbreviated (as to the meaning of which see note on 2 K. xxiii. 10).

yea, for the king it is] Or, "even it," horrible as it is, "hath been prepared for the King;" that is (as the Targ. gives it), the eternal King (cp. vi. 5), "whose fire is in Zion and His furnace in Jerusalem" (xxxi. 9):—for His righteous purposes; because only so can the foul abomination of the actual Tophet (Jer. vii. 31—34) be purged away.

he hath made...] Or, "One hath made."

Obs. The word rendered *made large* is the same that was used in v. 14; "Hell *hath enlarged* her desire."

the pile thereof] Or, "her funeral pile."

kindle it] Or, "burneth against her" (Lam. ii. 3, *s. w.*; cp. ch. xlii. 25; Jer. xliv. 6).

CHAP. XXXI. We have here a brief summary of what has been so frequently set forth about Samaria, Jerusalem, and Assyria. Samaria, in spite of her Egyptian alliance, shall fall; Jerusalem shall be protected by divine love; while the Assyrian shall be driven away in terror.

1. *for help*] xx. 6, xxx. 7.

and stay] Or, lean their confidence; xxx. 12.

on horses] which were imported from Egypt (1 K. x. 28, 29). The *horses, chariots, horsemen* seem to point back to the time when Egypt's chivalry was so signally overthrown (Exod. xiv. 9, 17, 23, xv. 1—4).

look not unto] *s. w. a.* xvii. 7.

2. They had come to consider obedience to God's law a piece of old-world simplicity; which debarred them from the advantages of Egyptian culture and intelligence. They should now learn that *He also is wise;* able, also, to "take the wise in their own craftiness" (Job v. 13).

and will bring evil] Or, "causeth evil to come" (1 K. xiv. 10; 2 K. xxii. 16);—the evil, which they thought they could keep at a distance by their policy. (Cp. Jer. v. 12, xxiii. 17.)

will not call back] Or, "hath not removed." The "words" uttered long ago by Moses, and now re-published by the prophets (cp. ix. 8), might seem to have been withdrawn: but it was not so. *He will arise* (xxxiii. 10) ere long to accomplish His words (Ps. xii. 5).

the house of the evildoers]—"house of *Israel*" no longer (*s. w. a.* i. 4).

the help] The helpers:—the Egyptians.

3. *are men*] Hebr. *adam;* made out of the ground. Cp. Ezek. xxviii. 2.

fall...fall down] Or, "stumble...fall."

fail together] Or, "come utterly to an end."

4. This and the following verse exhibit the combination of justice and mercy in God's

young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, *he* will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the ‖ noise of them: so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof.

‖ Or, *multitude.*

5 As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver *it; and* passing over he will preserve *it.*

6 ¶ Turn ye unto *him from* whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted.

7 For in that day every man shall [a] cast away his idols of silver, and † his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you *for* a sin.

8 ¶ Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee ‖ from the sword, and his young men shall be ‖† discomfited.

9 And † he shall pass over to ‖ his

[a] chap. 2. 20.
† Heb. *the idols of his gold.*
‖ Or, *for fear of the sword.*
‖ Or, *tributary.*
† Heb. *for melting*, or, *trilute.*
† Heb. *his rock shall pass away for fear.*
‖ Or, *his strength.*

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all-wise design respecting Jerusalem. He will assuredly fight against it; yet, no less assuredly, He will protect it (cp. xxix. 1—7).

roaring on his prey] Or, "growleth over his prey,"—resenting the interference of any who seek to rescue it.

when a multitude...] Or, "against which if a multitude..., he will not be **dismayed**" (xxx. 31).

to fight for] Rather, *to fight* **against**. So Delitzsch rightly. The phrase is precisely the same as in xxix. 7, 8; and in the only other places where it occurs, Num. xxxi. 7, Zech. xiv. 12, its meaning is equally unambiguous.

for mount...the hill] Cp. on x. 32 (*s. w.*).

5. Instead of inviting them to repent, *in order that* they may be delivered; He at once promises deliverance, and then (*v.* 6) calls them to return to Him.

As birds flying] Or, "hovering;" with outspread wings, to defend their young (cp. Ps. xci. 4). After seven centuries more, a voice was heard saying, "O Jerusalem!...how often would I have gathered thee!...and ye would not" (Matt. xxiii. 37). Who could so speak, except *the Lord of Hosts?*

defend...defending] The word is the same that is used in xxxvii. 35, xxxviii. 6 (2 K. xix. 34, xx. 6). It occurs elsewhere *only* in Zech. ix. 15, xii. 8. LXX. ὑπερασπιεῖ.

defending also...] Or, "defending, He will rescue also; protecting, He will also cause to escape." There is a plain reference to the deliverance out of Egypt; for the word rendered *passing over* (or, "protecting") is the one used in Exod. xii. 13, 23, 27 (the root of *pésach*, πάσχα). See the note on Exod. xii. 11.—A., S., Th. ὑπερβαίνων. The very land to which they resorted for help, ought to have reminded them of God's love and power.

Obs. The "Name of the Lord," which comes forth to execute wrath, in xxx. 27 (cp. xxvi. 21), corresponds to the "Destroyer" of Exod. xii. 23 (see ch. xxxvi. 10, li. 13). Cp. on xxvi. 20. When the people fell back into apostasy, the "Destroyer" reappeared, Jer. iv. 7, xv. 6, xxxvi. 29.

6. *Turn ye*] Or, **Return** *ye* (ix. 13, x. 21; Hos. xiv. 1).

have deeply revolted] (cp. xxix. 15; Hos. ix. 9). It was no surface evil, caused by sudden temptation. They had rebelled deliberately and on principle.

7. *shall cast away*] Or, "reject" (*s. w. a.* xxx. 12). Ye shall no longer "reject" My ordinances (Lev. xxvi. 15, 43), but your own fictions.

idols of...gold] **gods**. Cp. ii. 20.

for a sin] to be to you an abiding cause of guilt and of punishment (*s. w.* as Deut. xv. 9; Hos. xii. 8, H. 9).

8. The sin having been put away, the punishment is removed.

the Assyrian] Hebr. *Asshur.* As a whole, the Assyrian force would be destroyed: yet (*v.* 9) the king and a portion of his troops would escape.

with the sword, not...] Or, **by** *the sword* **of one that is not man** (Hos. xi. 9, *s. w.*), *yea, the sword* **of one not born of men** (*adam, v.* 3) *shall devour him.*

but he shall flee...] Rather, **and** *he shall* **get him to flight from before** *the sword.* Cp. xvii. 13.

discomfited] Or, "spirit-broken." LXX. εἰς ἥττημα. (Probably *s. w. a.* x. 18, xiii. 7, xix. 1. So Targ., Kimchi, Vitr.) Vulg. "vectigales;" and so Aben-Ezra with many moderns.

9. Render (nearly as marg.), *And his rock shall* **pass away** (Ps. xxxvii. 36) **because of terror**. Asshur's rock, beneath which the nation had thought itself secure, was, no doubt, their king. The Assyrian kings laid claim to divine power. (Cp. on xiv. 14.)

Obs. The King of xxxii. 1, who is like a protecting "Rock" (*s. w.*), is correlated to "princes," in the second clause of that verse; as this "rock" is here.

strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose fire *is* in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 *The blessings of Christ's kingdom.* 9 *Desolation is foreshewn.* 15 *Restoration is promised to succeed.*

BEHOLD, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

2 And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a † great rock in a weary land. † Heb. *heavy.*

3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

4 The heart also of the † rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak ‖ plainly. † Heb. *hasty.* ‖ Or, *elegantly.*

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shall be afraid of...] Or, *shall be* **dismayed** (cp. *v.* 4, xxx. 31, li. 7) **because of** *the Standard*:—which is no less terrible than the accompanying Sword (cp. lix. 19). It is God's uplifted Hand, "the hand upon the throne" (Exod. xvii. 15, 16).

whose fire...] Or, **that hath His fire** (xliv. 16, l. 11) *in Zion*:—protecting it against enemies; but also subjecting its citizens to a strict ordeal; trying "each man's work" (1 Cor. iii. 13). Cp. xxx. 33, xxxiii. 14; Mal. iv. 1 (H. iii. 19).

CHAP. XXXII. The mighty king of Assyria and his princes have disappeared. In their stead is seen (as by the rapid change of a "dissolving view") the righteous King and His princes.

Who this King is, will become fully evident from the description given of Him (see on *v.* 2). But the analogy of the transition from the fall of Asshur in x. 33, 34 to the reign of Messiah in xi. 1—10 would of itself suggest the true answer. It can only be the King in whom the long-deferred ideal of Ps. lxxii shall at length be realized;—He who is Israel's Judge and Lawgiver and Saviour (xxxiii. 22; cp. vi. 5).

Obs. The language of *v.* 1 clearly points to Prov. viii. 16, 17 (see Note A); where Eternal Wisdom (the Possessor of "counsel and effective working," ib. 15; see on xxviii. 29) says; "By Me *kings reign*, and governors decree *righteousness:* by Me *princes rule*, and nobles, even all the *judges* of the earth (*s. w.*)." Age after age, Divine Wisdom had been working in Israel, inviting men to follow her directions; and not without some good fruit. "There only" (it has been said) "in all antiquity was the true ideal of monarchy persistently aimed at" (Ewald, 'H. of Is.' III. 14). Yet human perverseness constantly came in to interfere with the divine work. False wisdom, with her "much fair speech" (Prov. vii. 21), often seduced Israel into adopting expedients of worldly policy, including idolatry and heathen alliances. But God's great plan should not be frustrated (xxxi. 2) by man's perverseness. A king should yet arise, who would fulfil Wisdom's ideal (cp. xxxiii. 6).

1. *righteousness...judgment*] *s. w. a.* ix. 7 (Ps. lxxii. 2). The preposition is strictly (not, *in*, but) "according to," as in xi. 3.

2. *And a man shall be*] See Zech. vi. 12, "Behold *the man* (*s. w.*), whose name is THE BRANCH;"—where Isai. xxxii. 2 and Jer. xxiii. 5 are conjoined. (Cp. 1 Tim. ii. 5.)

This MAN is represented as exercising divine prerogatives. He will be a shelter "from the storm;" but in xxv. 4 it was said; "Thou (Lord) hast been a refuge from the storm" (the storm, indeed, being God's indignation, xxx. 30). He will be as the shadow of a massive *Rock* (the word used of God in Ps. xviii. 1, xxxi. 3, xl. 2, xlii. 9) *in a weary land* (the words used in Ps. cxliii. 6, cp. lxiii. 1, of a soul that is athirst for God); whilst in xxv. 4 we have "Thou hast been... *a shadow from the heat.*" He is as "*streams of water* in a dry place;" such as refresh the soul, that puts its trust in God (cp. Ps. i. 3; Jer. xvii. 8).

This description is the more remarkable, because the chief sin, against which Israel is warned throughout these chapters, is, trusting in an arm of flesh. (Cp. ii. 22.)

There is but one explanation. The Righteous King is IMMANUEL.

The rendering "each one" for "*a man*" is quite untenable; see Note B.

in a dry place] *s. w. a.* xxv. 5.

weary] *s. w. a.* xxviii. 12, xxix. 8.

3. Under His reign the sentence that was passed in vi. 9, 10 shall be repealed.

dim] Or, "smeared" (nearly *s. w. a.* vi. 10). It shall no longer be, that "having eyes, they see not." (Cp. xlii. 18, xliii. 8; Mark viii. 18.)

4. *the rash*] Or, *the* **hasty**;—who from want of faith (xxviii. 16) were ever for precipitating matters, instead of abiding God's time. Such impatience sprang from, and led to, cowardice (xxxv. 4, *s. w.*).

shall understand knowledge] Lit. "shall

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said *to be* bountiful.

6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

7 The instruments also of the churl *are* evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even ‖when the needy speaketh right.

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he ‖stand.

‖ Or, *when he speaketh* against *the poor* in *judgment.*

‖ Or, *be established.*

9 ¶ Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech.

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have discernment to know." They will have skill to perceive the goodness of God's requirements (cp. xxix. 24).

shall be ready to speak plainly] Or, *shall* **make haste** *to speak* **clearly.** They, who had been compelled to speak in broken words and half sentences (cp. xxviii. 11), shall now make glad haste (Ps. xlv. 1) to use transparently simple language,—with no haze or mist to obscure the light of heavenly truth. (See the same word in xviii. 4.)

5. Then men's moral judgments shall be rectified.

The vile person] (Hebr. *nabhal*, in Ps. xiv. 1; Prov. xvii. 7, xxx. 22; Jer. xvii. 11, rendered "fool"), who lives a sensual, ungodly, life, *shall no more be called liberal* (or, generous, 2 Chro. xxix. 31); even though, like *Nabal*, he "hold a feast in his house like the feast of a king" (1 S. xxv. 36).

nor the churl...] (*v.* 7). Rather, *nor the churl* (or, niggard) **have the name of wealthy** (Job xxxiv. 19, *s. w.*). *His* hoarded riches are not truly wealth; they are full of woe (Hab. ii. 6; James v. 1—3).

6. *villany*] *s. w. a.* ix. 17 ("folly"). See 1 S. xxv. 25.

iniquity] *s. w. a.* xxix. 20, xxxi. 2.

to practise...] Or, **working profaneness** (ix. 17) *and* **speaking** *error* **against** *the Lord* (iii. 8); **emptying** *the soul of the hungry* (xxix. 8); **yea,** *the drink of the thirsty he will make to fail;*—as Nabal refused "bread and water" to David in the wilderness (1 S. xxv. 10, 11).

Obs. A comparison with xxix. 8 (and iii. 1) indicates a further application.—The rulers and teachers, who urged men to exchange the guidance of religious faith for that of worldly wisdom, and to prefer the licence of Syrian or Egyptian rites to the holiness of God's law, left men, amidst all their joviality, with hungry and parched souls.

7. *he deviseth*] Rather, **he himself hath devised.** He provides himself with evil *instruments;* and he himself furnishes the *plan* which his tools are to work out.

The word here rendered "destroy," is a rare word, used by Isaiah in two other places; *in both of which it is probable that the Assyrian is referred to* (xiii. 5, liv. 16;—in each case combined with "instruments," *s. w.*). A comparison of Hab. ii. 5—11 (where similar moral sentences are employed of imperial plunderers) would justify our supposing that he is referred to here also; the *poor* (or, **meek**) and *needy* being the faithful Jews (cp. xxix. 19, *s. w.*). There are traces of Sennacherib's having dealt falsely with Hezekiah (2 K. xviii. 13—17; see on ch. xxxvi. 1). Note further, that the expression, "speak against the Lord," used in *v.* 6, occurs of Sennacherib in 2 Chro. xxxii. 19. Compare also the expression "wicked counsellor" (or, *deviser* of wickedness, *s. w.*) used in Nahum i. 11 (of Sennacherib, probably) with the like expression in the present verse.

8. *the liberal*] (*v.* 5). This too was a term which might well be applied to Hezekiah. He had shewn a noble and generous spirit (2 Chro. xxx. 22—24):—he shall be requited. Generous thoughts are stored up for him in heaven against his time of need. He **hath devised** *liberal things* for others; *and* **he himself** *by liberal things shall* **be established** (Prov. xv. 22, *s. w.*): so that he shall stand firm and erect in that terrible crisis; upheld by the overflowing kindness of his God.

Obs. Such is the law of retribution, which shall prevail under the rule of the Righteous King;—who Himself would be the highest example of self-sacrificing generosity (liii. 12).

9—20. There is obviously an air of allegory about these verses. An examination of details confirms the first impression. For

(1) The address in *v.* 9, "Hear...give ear to my speech," is exactly of the kind, which introduces a parable (see on xxviii. 23).

(2) The two characteristic terms, "that are at ease" (*vv.* 9, 11) and "careless" (*vv.* 9, 10, 11) recur in the later verses, which plainly refer to Israel as a community; the former in *v.* 18 ("quiet") and xxxiii. 20; the latter in *vv.* 17 ("assurance") and 18 ("sure").

(3) There are some prominent grammatical peculiarities in *vv.* 11, 12, which are thus (and thus only) explained (see Note C).

10 †Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird *sackcloth* upon *your* loins.

12 They shall lament for the teats, for †the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.

13 Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns *and* briers; ‖yea, upon all the houses of joy *in* the joyous city:

14 Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the ‖forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

15 Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and [a] the wilderness

† Heb. *Days above a year.*

† Heb. *the fields of desire.*

‖ Or, *burning upon, &c.*

‖ Or, *clifts and watch-towers.*

[a] chap. 29. 17.

Obs. 1. The Targ. has: "*ye provinces* that dwell at ease,...*ye cities* that dwell in safety."

Obs. 2. In Amos vi. 1 we read, "Woe to them [the men] *that are at ease* (*s. w.*) in Zion, and that trust (or, are secure,—the word rendered 'careless' in Isaiah) in the mountain of Samaria." The character assigned in Amos to the men of Zion and Samaria, is here applied to the communities personified. (Cp. Ezek. xvi. 46.)

9. *Rise up*]—from your couches of self-satisfied thoughts. "Rise up" (as Del. well puts it, quoting Judg. iii. 20) to hear the message which I bring to you from God.

that are at ease] in self-complacency, *s. w. a.* Ps. cxxiii. 4.

careless] Or, "confident:"—free from any misgiving about possible danger (*s. w. a.* Prov. xiv. 16).

The verse should be divided at "voice." Lit. "Ye women..., rise up, hear my voice; ye daughters..., give ear to my speech." (Cp. Gen. iv. 23.)

10. *Many days and years*] Lit. "Days upon a year;" that is, probably, "the days mounting up to years;"—for many a long, revolving, year.

shall ye be troubled] (*v.* 11). Rather, **disquieted**; disturbed out of your repose.

Obs. The same word is used in 2 S. vii. 10; "I will appoint a place (a fixed standing-ground) for My people, for Israel; and will plant him, and he shall dwell in his own place, and *move* no more." This promise must now be reversed:—Hear it, Zion and Samaria, ye shall be thrown into commotion and unrest,—for many days (Hos. iii. 4; Lam. v. 20); even until the latter days.

the vintage...] Rather, *the vintage* **is at an end, no ingathering** *shall come.* The unfruitful vine is doomed;—no more vintage!

11. *Tremble*] The verb is in the masculine plural; for it is really the peoples of Ephraim and Judah that are addressed. The remaining four verbs are in the masculine singular; the two peoples forming together but one mass.

12. *They shall lament*...] Or, *They* **lament** *for the* **breasts**; since God has withdrawn the "blessings of the breasts and of the womb" (Gen. xlix. 25), giving them "a miscarrying womb and *dry breasts*" (Hos. ix. 14).

the pleasant fields] The fields of "that pleasant land" (Ps. cvi. 24); which their sins have turned into desolation (Zech. vii. 14).

the fruitful vine] Cp. Gen. xlix. 22.

13. The sentence passed on the vineyard in v. 6 is repeated.

the joyous city] *s. w. a.* xxii. 2.

14. *the palaces*...] Rather, *the palace* **is** *forsaken* (ii. 6; 2 K. xxi. 14); *the* **noise** (Amos v. 23, *s. w.*) *of the city* **is abandoned** (*s. w. a.* vi. 12, xxvii. 10; Lam. v. 20). Both verbs occur in Jer. xii. 7.

The word for *palace* is used in 1 K. xvi. 18 and 2 K. xv. 25, of the palace of the king of Israel. In Jer. xxx. 18, where Jerusalem is spoken of, it may refer to the temple.

The Targ. takes it so here: "the house of the sanctuary shall be laid waste: the noisy city shall be desolate in which they worship."

the forts and towers] Or, **hill** (Hebr. *'ophel*) **and watch-tower.** Both Samaria and Jerusalem had a locality named Ophel, or, The Hill; 2 K. v. 24; Neh. iii. 26. That of Jerusalem was the south-eastern slope of Mount Moriah. It was strongly fortified by Jotham (2 Chro. xxvii. 3) and by Manasseh (2 Chro. xxxiii. 14).

for dens...] Or, "in front of dens." Ophel and the towers had been fortified *as a protection to* the temple and palace. What they kept guard over, has become utterly ruined: the temple-rock broken into caverns; the adjacent hill-sides made as a wilderness.

Obs. They had made the temple a robbers' cavern, Jer. vii. 11 (*s. w.*).

wild asses] Residents of the desert: Job xxiv. 5, xxxix. 5—8. The word was applied figuratively to Ishmael (Gen. xvi. 12);—whose descendants have long occupied the larger part of Palestine.

Obs. The more thoroughly Palestine is explored, the stronger appears to be the sense of its desolation which is forced upon the explorer's mind. A recent traveller writes: "In

be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

19 When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; ‖ and the city shall be low in a low place.

‖ Or, *and the city shall be utterly abased.*

20 Blessed *are* ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth *thither* the feet of the ox and the ass.

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these regions [Palestine] we find hardly a mile without a ruin;...and, in places, mile after mile and square mile upon square mile of ruin. *It is a luxuriance of ruin.*" (Burton and Drake, 'Un. Syr.' I. p. 4.)

15. *Until*] The state of ruin, which of itself must have continued uninterruptedly "for ever," can be terminated only by the interposition of the grace of God.

be poured] Lit. "emptied out" (cp. liii. 12; Gen. xxiv. 24). The LXX. ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς πνεῦμα ἀφ' ὑψηλοῦ. Cp. Luke xxiv. 49.

and the wilderness **become** *a fruitful field*] Hebr. "Karmel." Cp. on xxix. 17.

God's land (called in Jer. ii. 7, "the land of Carmel," A. V. "a plentiful country") was now again a portion of the vast wilderness of lifeless humanity (Jer. iv. 26, *s. w.*; cp. ch. xxxiii. 9, lxiv. 10). When the Spirit should be poured out, the wilderness would "blossom" again (xxxv. 1) with the fruitfulness and beauty of Carmel; and God's own people should be "reckoned as a forest," possessing the most conspicuous position in the world's history.

Obs. The Pentecostal Church, the nucleus of Christendom, was Jewish. Then fruitful Carmel had the glory of Lebanon granted her.

16. *judgment...*] Vitringa compares xlii. 1—4; "He shall cause *judgment* to go forth *to the nations*," and "establish *judgment* in *the earth*." Under the ministration of the Spirit, equity shall find an abode in what had long been the wilderness of paganism; righteousness in the long-cultured field of Judaism.

17. *the work*] *s. w. a.* Hab. iii. 17, "*the labour* of the olive."

the effect] Or, "the service;"—the toil spent in the *cultivation* of righteousness (*s. w. a.* xxviii. 21, xxx. 24). Vulg. "cultus justitiæ."

Obs. So the "King who reigns in righteousness" (*v.* 1) verifies His title "Prince of Peace" (ix. 7). Cp. Rom. v. 1, xiv. 17.

quietness and assurance] The words that were used in xxx. 15 to set forth the *duty* of faith are here employed to represent the *reward* of faith.

18. *a peaceable habitation*] (xxxiii. 20). Lit. "the habitation of peace" (cp. Jer. xxxi. 23, *s. w.*);—where Peace resides, as a shepherd does in his homestead on the open down (Jer. xxxiii. 12).

dwellings] Or, "tabernacles;" *s. w. a.* Num. xxiv. 5; Song of Sol. i. 8.

resting places] *s. w. a.* xxviii. 12.

19. While this peace is secured to the Church, the Jewish polity shall be broken in all its parts:—*it shall hail* (xxviii. 2, 17, xxx. 30) **in the coming down of** *the forest; and* **in lowliness** *the city shall* **lie low.** Of the twenty-nine places where the noun "hail" occurs, no fewer than twenty relate to the plague which destroyed the *vines* of Egypt. So, the *vine* of the temple, the *forest* of the king's house, and the *city* at large shall be overthrown.

20. *Blessed are ye...*] Or, "Happy ye, that sow upon all waters;"—though it be far away from the now ruined city;—by "the rivers of Gozan" (2 K. xvii. 6), or the "streams of Babel" (Ps. cxxxvii. 1), or "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" (xviii. 2);—or by "the rivers and streams of waters" that shall break forth, in the day of grace, "on every high hill" (xxx. 23—25). Cast forth your seed over the wide world; "it shall be found after many days" (Eccl. xi. 1).

that send forth the **foot...**] to *till* the soil (xxx. 24); or, to tread in the seed that had been already sown.

Obs. Such was Isaiah's work;—to scatter the seed of the Word (lv. 10, 11) during these stormy years of Assyrian invasion. Some of his earlier prophecies may have been carried away by the ten tribes, to bear fruit in Media. But, at any rate, we know for certain that his teaching took root in Hezekiah's heart. So truly did *he* place his affiance in God, that to Rabshakeh his conduct seemed either folly or fanaticism (xxxvi. 4, 5, &c.). Yet through that seeming "folly" (1 Cor. i. 21) Hezekiah won deliverance.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 1.)

Compare

{Isai. xxxii. 1, לצדק ימלך מלך
{Prov. viii. 15, בי מלכים ימלכו * * צדק

{Isai. xxxii. 1, לשרים למשפט ישרו
{Prov. viii. 16, בי שרים ישרו * * שפטי *

Observe also that Prov. viii. 14 is probably referred to in ch. xxviii. 29.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 2.)

The rendering "each one" given by some moderns is ungrammatical. The meaning thus assigned to איש belongs to it when there is a related pronominal suffix attached to a following noun (Gen. xv. 10, &c.); and if איש be the *subject* of the verb, the verb precedes in the plural.

The instance quoted by Ewald, Exod. xvi. 19, is not in point. For the meaning of איש after the negative אל is, "any one;" just as it is after אם in Gen. xiii. 16; Song of Sol. viii. 7.

NOTE C. (ON *vv.* 9—11.)

The grammatical peculiarities referred to are:

(1) חרדו in *v.* 11; following *four* feminine plurals in *vv.* 9, 10.

(2) חגרה, ערה, פשטה, רגזה, all masc. singulars. Ewald tries to explain them as *plur. fem.* with the *nun* elided;—an elision (as Knob. and Del. properly object) which is unexampled.

(3) מספדים;—quite in keeping with the view which is advocated above; but surprisingly anomalous, if we render (as many do), "They are beating upon their breasts."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 *God's judgments against the enemies of the church.* 13 *The privileges of the godly.*

WOE to thee that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt

CHAP. XXXIII. About half a century has passed, since Isaiah spoke of a time when "Zion should be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness" (i. 27). He now (*v.* 5) beholds the work accomplished; "The Lord.....hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness." Such a condition is the result of discipline exercised by the "Righteous King" (xxxii. 1, 16; cp. ix. 7). He has allowed a mighty spoiler to come upon Israel (*vv.* 1, 3),—has withdrawn His covenanted mercy (*v.* 8),—has made the projects of the peoples as stubble burnt up by fire (*v.* 11). The land is in mourning (*v.* 9); the messengers of peace weep bitterly (*v.* 7); the sinners in Zion are afraid (*v.* 14). Samaria has fallen beneath the flames of divine indignation; can they, then, escape? Before long the Assyrian will lay siege to Jerusalem: then there will be but one asylum, "the munitions of rocks," to which those are admitted, who "walk in righteous acts" (*v.* 15).

Such is, obviously, the general tenor of the chapter. Commentators have diverged widely in their interpretation of details;—some, for instance, taking *v.* 4 of the citizens of Jerusalem rushing forth like locusts to gather the booty of the Assyrian camp; a strangely incongruous picture, and one quite at variance with what is suggested by Joel ii. 9.

It is of great importance to note the proper force of the following expressions:—

(1) *The* LORD *is exalted* (*v.* 5):—used in ii. 11, 17 of the effect of God's judgments *on Israel:* "*The* LORD *alone shall be exalted* in that day." Cp. v. 16.

(2) *Now will I rise*, &c. (*v.* 10). It is commonly assumed that this means, "against the Assyrian." A different view is suggested by xxxi. 2: "He also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back His words; *but will arise* (*s. w.*) *against the house of the evil-doers*" (Israel): and xxviii. 21: "*The Lord shall arise*.....to do His strange work" (upon Judah).

(3) *fire, shall devour you* (*v.* 11); and *devouring fire* (*v.* 14). See Deut. iv. 24: "The Lord thy God is *a devouring fire* (*s. w.*); a jealous God." (Cp. Exod. xx. 17.) So the Targ. on *v.* 14: "Who of us shall dwell in Zion, in which the brightness of His Shekinah is as devouring fire?" The word which is rendered "chaff" in *v.* 11, occurs elsewhere *only* in ch. v. 24;—where also it is in parallelism with "stubble." But in that passage it is God's judgment *on Judah* that is spoken of.

(4) *The earth mourneth and languisheth* (*v.* 9). This, being evidently a recurrence to xxiv. 4 (*s. w.*), represents the land withering away under a blight of ungodliness. God

not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; *and* when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

4 And your spoil shall be gathered *like* the gathering of the caterpiller: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

5 The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, *and* strength of † salvation: the fear of the LORD *is* his treasure.

7 Behold, their ‖ valiant ones shall

† Heb. *salvations.*
‖ Or, *messengers.*

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has withdrawn His blessing; therefore "Lebanon is ashamed:" Sharon and Carmel are turned into desert. (Cp. the converse in xxxv. 1, 2.) This withdrawal of God's favour is signified in the three clauses of the second half of *v.* 8: "He has broken the covenant," because (xxv. 5, *s. w.*) *they* had done so. (Cp. Ezek. xvi. 59; Ps. lxxxix. 39.) He has "rejected cities;" because they had "rejected" (v. 24, *s. w.*) His law. (Cp. Hos. ix. 17; Ps. lxxxix. 38; Jer. vii. 29; 2 K. xxiii. 27, *s. w.*) He no longer "regarded man" (Hebr. *enosh*, "frail man"), for whom He *had* shewn such marvellous regard (Ps. cxliv. 3).

(5) *who ... shall dwell with everlasting burnings* (*v.* 14)? This plainly refers to Ps. xv. 1 ("Who shall dwell?" *s. w.*) and Deut. xxxii. 22. Cp. Jer. xvii. 4, "Ye (Judah) have kindled a fire in Mine anger, which shall *burn* (*s. w.*) *for ever*."

In this address, then, we have the strongest consolation of the faithful alternating with the sharpest admonition of the ungodly. Its immediate occasion was, doubtless, the advance of the Assyrian power into Palestine; which, after destroying Samaria, threatened a like fate to Jerusalem. But it rises far above that first application, directing the Church's hopes to its true King; who "will save it" (*v.* 22), not from the Assyrian only, but from sin and its consequences (*v.* 24).

1. *that spoilest*] *s. w. a.* xxi. 2 (of Babylon; cp. Ps. cxxxvii. 8).

dealest treacherously] *s. w. a.* xxi. 2.

when thou shalt cease]—as having, in thy own estimation, *completed* thy work.

The Masoretes put an open space, or section-mark, *at the end of v.* 1: their remaining sections being *vv.* 2—6, 7—12, 13—24.

2. The prophet resumes the language of xxvi. 8 (cp. viii. 17, xxv. 2), *we have waited for Thee;*—during that long period (xxxii. 10) of desolation. Then he intercedes for the people; that in their "time of trouble" (Jer. xiv. 8) they may have Him for their "arm" (Jer. xvii. 5).

3. *the people*] *the* **peoples**;—both the surrounding nations, and in particular Israel and Judah (xiv. 6, xxx. 28; Joel ii. 6). That tumultuous commotion, which accompanied the armies of Assyria, did not spring from natural causes; it was really God's *lifting up* of Himself. Before Him the peoples *fled* away as wanderers (xxii. 3, xxix. 5, 7), and *were scattered* (*s. w. a.* xi. 12).

4. *your spoil...*] Or, *your* **plunder** (viii. 4) *shall be gathered*, **as a caterpillar gathereth**;—so that nothing is spared. The "caterpillar" (Hebr. *chasil*, "the consumer") is either the locust in its wingless state, when it is extremely voracious, or a distinct species of locust.

as the running to and fro...] Or, *as* **locusts run**, *shall* **they** *run upon* **it**,—in vast numbers, in orderly array, with insatiable greed. The same verb is used of the "northern army" in Joel ii. 9.

5. When all around has been laid waste, there is one fortress which the spoiler cannot scale: *The* LORD *is exalted*,—as a lofty, impregnable, tower of refuge (Prov. xviii. 10).

he dwelleth on high] *s. w. a.* xl. 26, lvii. 15.—From His "high and holy place" He has *filled Zion with judgment and righteousness;* for the Spirit has been poured down "from on high" (xxxii. 15, 16).

6. *And wisdom...*] Or, "And He shall be (*s. w. a.* viii. 14, xxii. 23) the stability of thy times, wealth (or, store) of salvation, wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3):—the address being to the people of Judah, or to Hezekiah. The Lord would support them securely in those critical times (cp. Ps. ix. 9).

the fear...] Lit. *the fear of the* LORD, **that** *is his treasure.* Hezekiah had sent his tribute to Sennacherib at the cost of removing the ornaments he himself had given to the temple, as well as emptying "the treasures of the king's house" (2 K. xviii. 13—16). By thus acting, he had put himself wholly in the right; paying the Assyrian the tribute due to him, and committing his cause, in reverent

cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

8 The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

9 The earth mourneth *and* languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed *and* ‖hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off *their fruits*.

‖Or, *withered away.*

10 Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

11 Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, *as* fire, shall devour you.

12 And the people shall be *as* the burnings of lime: *as* thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

13 ¶ Hear, ye *that are* far off, what I have done; and, ye *that are* near, acknowledge my might.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

15 He that [a]walketh †righteously, and speaketh †uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of ‖oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of †bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of †blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

[a] Psal. 15. 2. & 24. 4.
† Heb. *in righteousness.*
† Heb. *uprightnesses.*
‖ Or, *deceits.*
† Heb. *bloods.*

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affiance, to his God. He should be amply compensated.

Obs. Three of the terms used in this verse occur in xi. 2: "wisdom," "knowledge," and "the fear of the Lord." The word rendered "stability" occurs in xi. 5. Cp. on *v.* 13.

7. *Behold, their valiant ones*] So Del.; taking the singular noun (lit. "their Ariel," xxix. 1) as a collective to mean, "their lion-like heroes."—Or, it may be taken to refer to the hill of Sion (cp. on xxix. 1), which had God's power pledged to defend it. "Behold, their Ariel! they stand without:"—king, nobles, and people have gone forth, and "cry" in supplication (*s. w. a.* xix. 20).

the ambassadors (or, messengers) *of peace*] —the prophets, who came to announce God's *Covenant of Peace* (liv. 10, cp. lii. 7), as Isaiah did (xxvi. 3, 12, xxvii. 5) and Micah (v. 5) and Nahum (i. 15):—and the priests (Mal. ii. 5, 7).

weep bitterly] xvi. 9; Jer. xiii. 17; Joel ii. 17. So had the prophet wept over the ruin seen in the "Valley of Vision" (xxii. 4).

8. *broken*] See preliminary note.

9. *and hewn down*] Rather (as in xix. 6), **it is withered.**

shake off their fruits] Or, their leaves.

10. *Now will I rise*] to free the land from those, whose sin lies so heavy upon it (xxiv. 20); *s. w. a.* Ps. xii. 5.

11. *Ye shall conceive...*] Cp. Ps. vii. 14. (James i. 15.) Their worldly schemes would be as fuel of fire (ch. v. 24).

your breath] Or, "Your (proud) spirit!—fire shall devour you" (construction as in xxix. 16). The "devouring fire" is resumed in *v.* 14.

12. *the people*] *the* **peoples.** In that fierce flame they should become as calcined limestone, or as the ashes of a thorn-fire.

13. *far off...near*] According to Deut. xiii. 7, both these may be Gentile nations. Cp. ch. lvii. 19. All are bidden to observe the *might*, with which God would work out His great plan (*s. w. a.* in xi. 2. Cp. on *v.* 6 above). The same words, *know My might*, are used in Jer. xvi. 21; which describes the effect, that God's judgments upon sinful Israel should have on Gentile as well as Jew.

14. *hypocrites*] Or, "profane:" *s. w. a.* ix. 17, x. 6 (cp. xxiv. 5, xxxii. 6). They had long defied Him; but He has "arisen," and is proving that "His fire is in Zion" (xxxi. 9). They now remember, that He had described Himself of old as "a consuming fire" (Deut. iv. 24: cp. ch. v. 24). Who can "dwell with" His never-relaxing holiness? (Cp. Num. xvii. 12, 13.)

15. The answer is similar to that given in Pss. xv, xxiv. Whoso *walketh* (xxxv. 8) *in* **righteous deeds**, &c.—he is a faithful subject of the righteous King; and shall be safe in the day of trial. Cp. Micah ii. 7.

speaketh uprightly] Or, "equity" (*s. w. a.* xxvii. 7, xlv. 19; Prov. viii. 6).

shaketh his hands]—to free them from what had been put into them. He shakes off the bribes, as Paul shook off the viper.

blood] Or, **bloodshed**, i. 15.

seeing evil] Or, **looking on** *evil*:—so that no image of evil may enter in by the eye.

16 He shall dwell on [t]high: his place of defence *shall be* the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters *shall be* sure.

17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold [t]the land that is very far off.

18 Thine heart shall meditate terror. [b]Where *is* the scribe? where *is* the [t]receiver? where *is* he that counted the towers?

19 Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a [‖]stammering tongue, *that thou canst* not understand.

20 Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle *that* shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

21 But there the glorious LORD

[t] Heb. *heights*, or, *high places.*

[t] Heb. *the land of far distances.*

[b] 1 Cor. 1. 20.

[t] Heb. *weigher?*

[‖] Or, *ridiculous.*

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16. *on high*] Or, "in high places" (Job xxv. 2): with Him, who *dwelleth on high* (*v.* 5).

his place of defence...] Or, "**strongholds of the rocks** shall be his **refuge.**" The word for "refuge" is the same as in xxv. 12; Ps. ix. 9, xlvi. 7, 11. He shall find shelter in God's promises;—more secure retreats than any rocky fortress.

shall be given him] Or, **is** *given.* A store has been already assigned for his support during that time of trial.

shall be sure] **is** *sure*;—coming from a fountain that *cannot fail* (Jer. xv. 18, *s. w.*).

17. *Thine eyes*] Cp. Job xix. 27.

the king] (*v.* 22, xxxii. 1; Jer. viii. 19). The Targ. "Thine eyes shall see the Shekinah of the King of ages!" The noun for *beauty* is from the verb which is used of Messiah in Ps. xlv. 2 (lit. "Thou art *exceeding beauteous*"). They who had wept bitterly over Zion's calamity, should behold Him whose "throne is for ever and ever" (Ps. xlv. 6; cp. Lam. v. 19).

the land that is very far off] The parallelism (as well as the recurrence of the words "thine eyes shall behold" in *v.* 20) shews that this is to be understood of the "goodly land," for which the oppressed daughter of Zion sent forth her sighs ("*from* a distant land," Jer. viii. 19, *s. w.*).

Obs. The repetition of "thine eyes shall see" (*vv.* 17, 20) recalls the promises in xxix. 18, xxx. 20 ("thine eyes shall see thy teachers"), xxxii. 3; cp. xxxv. 5, xlii. 18.

18. *meditate terror*] Or, *meditate* **in** *terror*:—with awe such as is inspired by the presence of the King (see Prov. xx. 2, *s. w.*), who had interposed to save when human help failed. The *scribe* (or, wise and learned secretary), *the receiver* (or, chancellor of the exchequer), *he that counted the towers* (the officer in charge of the fortifications; see Ps. xlviii. 12, 13, *s. w.*); these,—representing Policy, Finance, and Military Art (Schmieder), —had done their utmost, and had been compelled to confess their impotence. Then it was that "the power of God" and "the wisdom of God" were manifested "to save them that believed" His word of promise:—as Hezekiah did.

Obs. In 1 Cor. i. 20 St Paul joins together Isai. xxxiii. 18 and xliv. 25; having in the preceding verse quoted Isai. xxix. 14.

19. *Thou shalt not...*] Or, **That stubborn people shalt thou** *not see*;—they shall have disappeared (cp. Exod. xiv. 13).

of a deeper speech...] Or, "of speech too deep (lit. too deep of lip) to be heard, of derisive tongue, **without understanding.**" The last phrase shews that "scornful" Judah (xxviii. 14) is meant; cp. xxvii. 11, "a people *of no understanding* (*s. w.*)." With the "deep of lip" compare xxix. 15, xxxi. 6.

This is commonly referred to the Assyrians; but the reason just adduced appears to be decisive: see Note A.

20. *our solemnities*] *s. w. a.* i. 14.

a quiet habitation] Both words occur in xxxii. 18.

a tabernacle...] Or, **a tent** *that is not taken down*,—in the way that nomade tents are. Cp. 2 S. vii. 10.

the stakes] To which the tent-ropes are fastened; *s. w. a.* liv. 2.

21. There shall be no need to move the tent about in search of fresh pasturage, for the site of the New Zion shall be like that of Paradise:—it shall be surrounded by *broad rivers and streams*, vast as Euphrates or the Nile (so the words import).—It is the imagery of iv. 1. Zion is the religious centre of the world. Those mighty streams that surround her (unlike Nile or Euphrates) will not be frequented by "oared galley" or "majestic ship." Zion is not one of the world's emporia; and no hostile fleet invades it:—for under the reign of the King of Righteousness there is no war.

there the glorious LORD*...*] Or, "there in majesty the Lord is ours [for us, on our side; as in Josh. v. 13; Ps. cxviii. 6, cxxiv. 1]; a

will be unto us a place †of broad rivers *and* streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

† Heb. *broad of spaces*, or, *hands*.

22 For the LORD *is* our judge, the LORD *is* our †lawgiver, the LORD *is* our king; he will save us.

† Heb. *statute-maker*.

23 ‖Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.

‖ Or, *They have forsaken thy tacklings*.

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein *shall be* forgiven *their* iniquity.

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place, &c." The adjective rendered "glorious" (or, "in majesty") is the same that is used in speaking of the "gallant" (or, "majestic") ship. It is used in a similar antithesis in Ps. xciii. 4.

pass thereby] Or, "thereon." The whole phrase occurs in xxxv. 8. (On the words for "oars" and "ship" see Note B.)

22. *he will save us*] (xxv. 9). HE—the King—will save us. Cp. Hos. xiii. 10: "Where is thy king now, that he may save thee?" (See also Exod. xv. 2, 18.)

23. Most commentators have supposed the figure in this verse to be that of a ship. But, since the word rendered "tacklings" has just been used in *v.* 20 of the *tent-cords*;—since the word for "sail" has already occurred seven times in the sense of *standard* or *banner* (v. 26, xi. 10, 12, xiii. 2, xviii. 3, xxx. 17, xxxi. 9), while in xxx. 17 the word for "mast" was the pole from the top of which the banner floated;—and since *v.* 24 appears still to contemplate Jerusalem as a tent, it seems better to render: "Thy ropes are slackened; they cannot make firm the socket of their tent-pole; they have not unfurled the banner:—then was there a prey of abundant plunder divided; the lame did carry off spoil."—Palestine at large is viewed as "*the place* of the Tent" (liv. 2); and the tent itself is Jerusalem, toward which all the *lines* of the tribal portions (Josh. xvii. 5; cp. Ps. xvi. 6) were, in idea, fastened. The tempest of invasion is sweeping down on the spot; the tent in its midst is shaking; the tent-pole, David's lineage, and its socket, the Davidic Covenant, are giving way; the royal banner is furled. Then the KING appears, and all is changed in a moment. The "lame man springs forth as the hart" (xxxv. 6), to gather the spoil of the routed enemy.

Obs. Who the enemy was, is evident from the next verse. Cp. xlix. 24, liii. 11, 12.

24. In xxii. 14 it was solemnly declared to the men of Jerusalem, "This iniquity shall not be forgiven you, till ye die." The inhabitants of the restored Jerusalem are a people whose "iniquity *is* forgiven" (or "taken away," *s. w. a.* Ps. xxxii. 1): and its penal consequences abolished (cp. xxxviii. 1, 17).

This (says Sir E. Strachey) is "the Evangelical Prophet's anticipation of Him who said to the *sick* man: Son, be of good cheer; *thy sins* are forgiven thee."

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 19.)

There are two serious objections to the rendering, "that thou canst not understand."

1. בִּינָה is "insight;" the *faculty* or *habit* of intelligence. It is nowhere used *transitively* (as a "nomen actionis").

2. אין בינה, being in the nature of an adjective (like אין הבין, Ps. xxxii. 9; אין עינים, ch. lix. 10, אין לב, Hos. vii. 11), can only qualify the word עם. Compare Jer. v. 21; "Hear ye now this, O foolish people and without understanding (אין לב)."

The use of the words "deep of lip" in a difficult passage, Ezek. v. 5, 6, cannot overrule the plain inference drawn from these facts.

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 21.)

It should be noted that the word rendered "oars" occurs nowhere else except in ch. xxviii. 15; where it means "scourge." Also, that the word for "ship" is the unusual one employed in Num. xxiv. 24; Dan. xi. 30, of "the ships of Kittim." The term seems to point to a hostile invader.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 *The judgments wherewith God revengeth his church.* 11 *The desolation of her enemies.* 16 *The certainty of the prophecy.*

COME near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and † all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

† Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

2 For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

4 And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be [a] rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a [b] falling *fig* from the fig tree.

[a] Rev. 6. 14.

[b] Rev. 6. 13.

5 For my sword shall be bathed in

CHAP. XXXIV. In Ahaz's reign, "the Edomites came and smote Judah and carried away captives" (2 Chro. xxviii. 17). Their "pitiless" jealousy (Amos i. 11) of Israel shewed itself especially in their joy over Jerusalem's overthrow by the Babylonians (Ps. cxxxvii. 7; cp. Obad. 10—14; Lam. iv. 21, 22, Ezek. xxxv. 5, 11). Therefore as they had united themselves with Babel in her cruelty, they must share in her punishment:—compare the denunciations in *vv.* 13, 14 and in xiii. 21, 22.

That literal Edom, naturally "a singularly fertile country" (Committee of Pal. E. F., 'Our Work in Pal.' p. 308, 9), was reduced to desolation by the end of the fifth century before Christ, may be gathered from Mal. i. 3 (cp. on xxi. 12). Volney reported that within a three days' journey of the Dead Sea, towards the S. E., he found 30 ruined cities "absolutely deserted."

It has, however, been very generally recognized from the earliest times (as by Eusebius and Jerome), that the chapter must be allegorical;—allegory being no way inconsistent with the existence of a basis of historical fact.

The reasons for adopting this view are obvious and decisive.

1. The invitation in *vv.* 1, 2 shews that the message about to be delivered is of universal interest ("all nations and all their host"): while the language implies (cp. on xxviii. 23) that the communication, which requires so great attention, is of a parabolical kind.

2. The allegorical character of ch. xxxv is undeniable. But chh. xxxiv and xxxv are linked together by the phrase "habitation of dragons (or, jackals)" in xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 7 (*s. w.*). As, therefore, the Zion of ch. xxxv is the ideal "City of God," so the Edom of ch. xxxiv must include all who hate and persecute the mystical Zion (cp. xxxiv. 8).

3. The names "Edom," and "Bozrah," recur in another allegorical passage (lxiii. 1—6).

4. *Edom*, the surname of him who "despised his birthright," was a fitting designation for those who profanely slighted their privilege as God's special people (see Introd. p. 20).

5. The application to Israel is confirmed by Jer. ix. 10, 11, 20 (see Note A).

6. In any case, *vv.* 6, 7, are admitted to be figurative (cp. Jer. li. 40; Ezek. xxxix. 17; Zeph. i. 7, 8). But if the lambs and goats and bullocks be symbolical, the unclean animals that are to occupy their places should be so too.

7. How truly the expression "people of My curse (*chērem*)," or, anathema (*v.* 5), describes Israel (during its casting away), is evident from ch. xliii. 28; "I gave Jacob to the curse (*chērem*)." Cp. Zech. xiv. 11; Mal. iii. 24 (iv. 6).

Obs. In Hebr. xii. 12 we have a quotation of Isai. xxxv. 3. Then in the following verses (16, 17), Esau stands as the type of profane and sensual-minded men; who are identified in *v.* 15 with those against whom Moses warned Israel in Deut. xxix. 18—23: a passage which is referred to in Isai. xxxiv. 9.

1. *ye nations...the earth*] Cp. Ps. xlix. 1.

2. *the indignation...*] Or, **the Lord hath** *indignation* **against**...*and wrath* **against** *all their* **host**: *He hath* **devoted** *them*;—laid them under ban (*s. w. a.* xl. 15).

3. "Their stench shall go up;" Joel ii. 20.

4. *the host of heaven*]—which corrupt Israel worshipped (2 K. xvii. 16, xxi. 3, 5).

be dissolved] Or, "moulder away;" as by some inherent cause of decay. (Cp. the noun in v. 24.)

rolled together] Or, *rolled* **up**;—as a chronicle, whose contents have been read through. The former things are now forgotten (lxv. 17).

shall fall...] Or, "shall wither, as a leaf withereth from off a vine, yea, as witherings from off a fig-tree."

5. *shall be bathed...*] Or, **hath been** *bathed* (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 7) *in heaven.* Both the meaning of the word itself ("hath drunk to

heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

‖ Or, *rhinoceroths.* 7 And the ‖ unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land ‖ shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

‖ Or, *drunken.*

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD'S [c] vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

[c] chap. 63. 4.

9 And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; [d] the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

[d] Rev. 18. 18. & 19. 3.

11 ¶ [e] But the ‖ cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

[e] Zeph. 2. 14. Rev. 18. 2.

‖ Or, *pelican.*

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none *shall be* there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in

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the full"), and the way in which it is used in *v.* 7, seem to imply that the sword of Divine Justice (cp. Deut. xxxii. 41, 42, Ps. xlv. 3) had been wielded in heavenly regions:—that there had been "war in heaven."

upon Idumea] (*v.* 6). Rather, *upon* **Edom**;—type of those, who, belonging to the Seed of Promise, forfeited their privileges.

and upon...] The *and* introduces a fuller description of what precedes. The "people *of My curse*" (or, ban, *s. w. a.* 1 K. xx. 42), must, at least, include that which was styled in x. 6, "the people *of My wrath*,"—Israel. Dean Stanley ('S. and P.' p. 193) speaks of "the desolation and degradation, which have so often left on those who visit Jerusalem the impression of an *accursed* city."

6. *The sword...*] Or, "The Lord hath a sword; it is filled..."

made fat...] "made rich with fat" (*v.* 7).

lambs...goats...] The smaller cattle in this verse and the larger in the next represent the various ranks of the people.—The *fat of the kidneys of rams* was prescribed to be burnt at the consecration of Aaron (Exod. xxix. 22).—That heavenly sword pierced even to "the reins" of *its human victims.* (Jer. xvii. 10; Lam. iii. 13; cp. Heb. iv. 12.)

in Bozrah] (Gen. xxxvi. 33; Amos i. 12). The name probably meant "place of vintage" (Jer. xlix. 9, 13). Cp. ch. lxiii. 1—6.

7. *the unicorns*] Or, "wild-oxen" (see on Job xxxix. 9). They *shall* **go** *down*,—to the slaughter, Jer. l. 27.

8. *day of...vengeance*] lxi. 2; cp. Deut. xxxii. 35, 43; ch. lix. 17, lxiii. 4 (Luke xxi. 22). Lit. "For the Lord hath a day of vengeance."

the year of recompences] In Hos. ix. 7, the retribution lights on Israel:—"The *days of recompence* are come; *Israel shall know* it." Cp. ch. xxxv. 4, lxv. 6, lxvi. 6.

for the controversy of...] Or, **to plead for Zion** (i. 17, li. 22, *s. w.*); to assert the rights of the true "city of God" against all that harass her (xlix. 17).

9. Compare Deut. xxix. 23, 24.

10. *not be quenched*] lxvi. 24.
shall lie waste] *s. w. a.* Jer. xxvi. 9.

11. *the cormorant*] Or, **pelican**. On the "bittern," see xiv. 23.

the line of...] Or, *the line of* **desolation** (Hebr. "tohu") *and the* **plummet** *of emptiness* (Hebr. "bohu").—It should be laid waste with as much care and exactness as men usually apply in building (Amos vii. 7—9; 2 K. xxi. 13). It should be hurled back into the condition, out of which God's creative voice reared the earth (Gen. i. 2; cp. Jer. iv. 23).

12. *They shall call...*] Or, *Her nobles, though none be there, they invite to the kingdom.*—The old nobility (*Horim*, Gen. xxxvi. 29), from whom the kings of Edom were elected, have died off.

13. *thorns shall come up...*] Lit. *her palaces shall mount up with thorns; nettles and brambles* **shall be** *in* **her** *fortresses; and* **she** *shall be a habitation of* **jackals** (xxxv. 7; cp. xiii. 22), *a court for* **ostriches** (xiii. 21).

the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, *and* a court for ‖ † owls.

‖ Or, *ostriches.* † Heb. *daughters of the owl.*

14 † The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with † the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the ‖ screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

† Heb. *Ziim.* † Heb. *Ijim.* ‖ Or, *night monster.*

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

16 ¶ Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.

17 And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

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14. *wild beasts of...*] *s. w. a.* xiii. 21, 22. *the screech owl also*] Or, *there* **verily hath** *the screech-owl* **settled** (after her long wanderings), *and* **found her** *a place of rest.* Edom has a base resemblance to Zion, in which "rest" and "refreshment" were to be found (xxviii. 12; the words are almost identical).

15. *There shall...*] Or, *There* **hath the arrow-snake** (Bochart, and most moderns) **made** *her nest; and* **laid**, *and* **hatched**, *and* **gathered**;—in undisturbed quiet. *there...also*] *there* **verily** (*v.* 14) **are** *the vultures gathered*, in dismal conclave; **each** *one with her* **neighbour** (fem.). The last phrase occurs elsewhere only in Jer. ix. 20; where the women of Zion are to teach "every one her neighbour lamentation;" and that because "a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled" (*v.* 19).

16. *Seek ye...*] Or, **Inquire ye** *out of the book* (Jer. xxxvi. 11, *s. w.*)...*and* **read aloud** —(Jer. li. 63). Search the volume, in which Moses and the prophets have recorded God's threatenings against the ungodly (Deut. xxviii. 58, xxix. 20, 27; 2 K. xxii. 13. Cp. ch. xxix. 11, 12, 18, xxx. 8). *shall fail*] Or, **is missing** (*s. w. a.* xl. 26). "*All* the curses that are written in this book" (Deut. xxix. 20, 27) shall have taken effect. *my mouth it hath...*] Or, "by my mouth hath **He** (as in *v.* 17) given commandment, and by His Spirit hath **He** gathered them." Vulg. "quod ex ore meo procedit, Ille mandavit."

17. *And he...*] Or, **Yea, He Himself.** He, who originally *allotted the land to the people* (Num. xxvi. 55; Josh. xix. 51), will now make it over by a formal act of transfer to these gloomy denizens.

Obs. Immediately after the record of curses in Deut. xxix follows the assurance of mercy in case of repentance (xxx. 1—10). "The Lord will *rejoice* over thee for good, as he *rejoiced* over thy fathers." The same change is presented here in ch. xxxv. Compare the like contrast in Ps. lxix. 25, 35, cii. 14, 28.

NOTE A.

With Isai. xxxiv		Compare Jer. ix
v. 10, אין עבר בה.		*v.* 9, מבלי איש עובר.
v. 13, נוה תנים.		*v.* 10, מעון תנים.
v. 15, אשה רעותה.		*v.* 19, אשה רעותה.

Isai. xxxiv. 9 looks back to Deut. xxix. 22 (A.V. 23).
Jer. ix. 12—15 ,, ,, 24—28.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1 *The joyful flourishing of Christ's kingdom.* 3 *The weak are encouraged by the virtues and privileges of the gospel.*

THE wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

CHAP. XXXV. In ch. xxxiii. 9, Lebanon had "been ashamed and withered away;" Sharon and Carmel had been laid bare. Now "the glory of Lebanon," "the beauty of Sharon and Carmel," are given to the desert (*vv.* 1, 2); and this because the dwellers in it see "the glory of the Lord, the beauty of our God."

2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, *and* the excellency of our God.

3 ¶ [a]Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

4 Say to them *that are* of a [†]fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompence; he will come and save you.

5 Then the [b]eyes of the blind shall be opened, and [c]the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 Then shall the [d]lame *man* leap as an hart, and the [e]tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall [f]waters break out, and streams in the desert.

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* [‖]grass with reeds and rushes.

8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall

[a] Hebr. 12. 12.
[†] Heb. *hasty*.
[b] Matth. 9. 27. & 11. 5. & 12. 22. & 20. 30. & 21. 14. John 9. 6, 7.
[c] Matth. 11. 5. Mark 7. 32.
[d] Matth. 11. 5. & 15. 30. & 21. 14. John 5. 8, 9.
[e] Acts 3. 2. & 8. 7. & 14. 8. Matth. 9. 32. & 12. 22. & 15. 30.
[f] John 7. 38, 39.
[‖] Or, *a court for reeds, &c.*

In *v.* 7, this desert is identified with the land that had become "the habitation of jackals,"—the accursed land of xxxiv. 13.

Obs. Short as this chapter is, it supplied many of the characteristic elements of the Second Part of Isaiah. Compare

with *v.* 1,...xli. 19, xlii. 11.
v. 2,...xl. 5, xliv. 23, xlix. 13, lii. 9, 10, lv. 12, 13, lx. 1, 13.
v. 3,...xl. 30, 31.
v. 4,...xl. 9, 10, xli. 10, 13, lxi. 2.
v. 5,...xlii. 7, xliii. 8.
vv. 6, 7,...xli. 18, xliii. 19, xliv. 3, xlviii. 21, xlix. 10.
v. 8,...xl. 3, xlix. 11, lii. 1, 11, lxii. 10.
vv. 9, 10,...li. 10, 11, lxii. 12, lxv. 19.

1. *solitary place*] Rather, **parched (land)**: *s. w. a.* liii. 2.

shall be glad for them] Or, "rejoice over them" (lxv. 18). The persons, who cause the sudden joy (cp. the pronoun in Ps. lxxxvii. 1), must be the same that are spoken of in *v.* 2, "*they* shall see;" who are also the "redeemed" of *v.* 9.

as the rose] Elsewhere only in Song of Sol. ii. 1 (see the note there).

2. *they shall see*] *They*, the children of Zion, who had been in the waste wilderness (cp. xxiv. 14). The LXX. ὁ λαός μου. Targ. "the house of Israel."

the glory of the LORD] The angelic anthem (vi. 3) begins to be fulfilled. (Cp. xl. 5.)

3. *Strengthen ye*] It is God's own command, to His prophets and the faithful generally (as in xl. 1). The fruits of it are visible in Hezekiah's address, 2 Chro. xxxii. 7.

the weak hands] that are relaxing their hold on God's promises (Heb. xii. 3, 12).

the feeble knees] Lit. "stumbling;"—tottering under the burden of national calamity.

4. *fearful*] Or (marg.), **hasty** (xxxii. 4).

your God will come] xl. 9, 10; Mal. iii. 1.

he will come] *He* **Himself** *shall come.* LXX. αὐτὸς ἥξει.

5. *eyes ... ears*] The sentence passed in vi. 9 is remitted. Cp. xlii. 7.

Obs. The miracles of healing worked by our Lord were outward pledges of His being indeed the Person, whose Advent was foretold by Isaiah. (See Dr T. Jackson, Vol. VI. pp. 444—455.) They furnished a sufficient answer to John's query, "Art Thou *He that was to come?*" Matt. xi. 1—5.

6. *the lame*]—who had gone "limping on two opinions" (1 K. xviii. 21). He should now have his "way perfect," his "feet like hinds' feet" (Ps. xviii. 32, 33).

shall ... break out] Lit. **have ... broken forth.** At the presence of its God, the desert has produced springs of water; as of old, Exod. xvii. 6; Ps. lxxiv. 15, lxxviii. 15, 16. What marvel, then, if the wilderness of humanity be also renovated?

7. *the parched ground*] Or, **the burning sand**;—which produces the *mirage*. Now instead of the delusive image there shall be a real lake. The *mirage* has often supplied eastern writers with an illustration of the disappointing character of earthly good. What, indeed, was the whole pursuit after happiness to the heathen world but a succession of illusions? (Cp. lv. 2.)

the habitation of dragons] Or, "of jackals;" *s. w. a.* xxxiv. 13. Places once covered with *ruins* (the haunt of jackals) shall be as the banks of the Nile (xviii. 2, "bulrush;" xix. 6, "reeds," *s. w.*).

8. *an highway*] *s. w. a.* xi. 16.

and a way] The nature of this Way was implied in xxx. 21. It is now explicitly styled, *the way of holiness* (cp. Prov. xvi. 31); the way marked out by Holiness, and under her control.—Or (it may be), "the way of

not pass over it; [1] but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*.

[1] Or, *for he* shall be *with them.*

9 No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there:*

10 And the [r] ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

[r] chap. 51. 11.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Sennacherib invadeth Judah.* 4 *Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, by blasphemous persuasions soliciteth the people to revolt.* 22 *His words are told to Hezekiah.*

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the sanctuary" (like, "the way of the Tree of Life," Gen. iii. 24). Cp. Heb. x. 19, 20.

the unclean...] Or, "there shall not pass on it (xxxiii. 21) any that is unclean;" lii. 1.

but it shall be for those]—the persons alluded to in *vv.* 1, 2, the pilgrims of Zion. Or, "and He Himself is theirs" (cp. xxxiii. 21);—He, to whose sanctuary they are travelling; He, the Holy One, the author of Way; He is their guide (cp. xxx. 20, 21):—walking in that way, they cannot possibly go wrong. So of old (remarks Calvin) He, who redeemed Israel out of Egypt, Himself guided them (Exod. xiii. 21, xv. 13).

the wayfaring men...] Or, **they that walk in the way**, *though fools*, *shall not* **go wrong**. What is meant by "walking in the way," is clear from xxxiii. 15 ("whoso walketh in righteous deeds"). Cp. Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

9. *No lion*] No imperial conqueror (Nahum ii. 11, 12); no cruel enemy (Ps. x. 9, xvii. 12); no destroyer (Ps. xxii. 21; 1 Pet. v. 8).

nor any ravenous beast...] Or, "neither shall the mightiest of beasts mount thereon." It shall be too high for him to climb up to it.

but the redeemed shall walk there] Or, "shall advance" ("from strength to strength," Ps. lxxxiv. 7). The word rendered "redeem" is used of God's rescuing Israel out of Egypt in Exod. vi. 6, xv. 13: ch. li. 10, lxiii. 9.

Obs. The verbs for which "redeem" and "ransom" stand in *vv.* 9, 10, had been already used in Hos. xiii. 14 of God's final liberation of His people from Death and Hades. Cp. Ps. xlix. 15; Job xix. 25.

10. This verse occurs (with one letter changed) in li. 11; after a verse ending (as *v.* 9 here) with "redeemed."

the ransomed of the LORD] who have become His by right of ransom. *From what* Israel needed to be ransomed, is stated in Ps. cxxx. 8 (*s. w.*); *by* what *means*, in ch. i. 27.

shall return]—"from the land of the enemy" (Jer. xxxi. 16).

and come...] Rather, *and* **they shall** *come to Zion* (Ps. lxxxiv. 7) *with* **singing** (ch. xlix. 13), *and everlasting* **gladness shall be** *on their head:*—the consecrating "oil of gladness" (xlv. 7) having been poured over them. (Cp. Exod. xxix. 7; Ps. cxxxiii. 2.)

they shall obtain...] Vulg. "obtinebunt."—When once they have *laid hold of* that joy, "sorrow and sighing," which had hung around them during their pilgrimage, "flee away." The word rendered "obtain" implies a previous *pursuit*. The LXX. frequently translate it by καταλαμβάνω, the word used in Phil. iii. 12, 13.

There is something inexpressibly touching in this conclusion of the long roll of prophecy, which the holy prophet had so faithfully, and so patiently, unfolded.

We cannot doubt that his sympathetic soul had mourned deeply over those whom he reproved. But now he is comforted by a vision, which shews him the anathema removed from Israel and vengeance inflicted on the enemy who had so marred the Land of Promise.

He now rests awhile, (how long we do not know,) that the nation may have time to prepare for taking part in that great crisis, which is to supply so wonderful an instance of God's readiness to deliver the penitent. The national doom, however, was only suspended, not rescinded. After a few years it will come back with increased momentum. Then the prophet will be bidden to open his lips again to speak not only of a wonderful recovery of his own people from Babylon, but of a Redemption which concerns the whole world.

CHAPS. XXXVI—XXXIX.—These chapters are referred to in 2 Chro. xxxii. 32 as a part of the "VISION" of Isaiah. Nearly the whole of them is embodied in 2 K. xviii—xx.

They consist of two portions:—

1. Chh. xxxvi and xxxvii contain a history of the event, which had been predicted nearly thirty years before, viii. 5—10, and frequently alluded to afterwards, x. 12—19, 33, 34, xiv. 24, 25, xxx. 28—31, xxxi. 8.—It was stated definitely that the stream of Assyrian conquest, after it had overflowed Samaria, would "reach even to the neck" of Judah; and then be suddenly turned back.

The fact of the prediction is unquestionable. The actual overthrow of the Assyrian is as certain as any event in the world's annals.

These two chapters, then, are the historical goal of chh. vii—xxxv.

2. The two following chapters, on the

[a] 2 Kin. 18. 13. [b] Chron. 32. 1.

NOW [a]it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, *that* Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

2 And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the [l] scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the [t] recorder.

4 ¶ And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

5 I say, *sayest thou*, (but *they are but* [t] vain words) [l] *I have* counsel and

[l] Or, secretary. [t] Heb. recorder. [t] Heb. a word of lips. [l] Or, but counsel and strength are for the war.

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other hand, are the historical starting-point of chh. xl—lxvi.

Chh. xxxviii, xxxix tell of the fall of him who had checked the stream of national corruption; who suppressed idolatry, restored the temple-worship, and followed the guidance of the prophetic word; who had been rescued both from a fatal malady and from the assault of the Assyrian. When such a one fell away, what higher proof could be given that Judah must be subjected to the severe discipline of the captivity?

1. *in the fourteenth year...*] As Jotham and Ahaz each reigned 16 years, this was the forty-sixth year since the vision recorded in ch. vi: or, B.C. 713. Almost a whole jubile-period had passed. Was the land to be reclaimed at the end of that period out of the hand of the oppressor? (See on xxxvii. 30.)

Sennacherib] Hebr. *Sancheriv*. The Σαναχάριβος of Herodotus is, therefore, nearer to correctness than the Σενναχηρείμ of the LXX. The cuneiform decipherment (*Sin-ahi-irib*) is only to be regarded as tentative (see the two, almost entirely different, sets of characters in Dr Schrader's 'Keil-Inschriften,' ss. 121, 2). One of the characters read, *ahi*, is also read *kur*, and, *bab*. (See M. Oppert, 'Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscr.,' Prem. Série, T. VIII. pp. 579, 632, and 581, 591; Schrader, ss. 42, 64, 74, 111.)

From 2 K. xviii. 13—16 we gather that the immediate cause of Sennacherib's invasion was Hezekiah's ceasing to pay tribute. It would seem that Hezekiah was not justified in taking this step. (Cp. Ezek. xvii. 11—17.) He himself said to Sennacherib, "*I have sinned; return from me; that which thou puttest on me, I will bear*" (2 K. xviii. 14). But he had set himself right by sending the tribute-money: while Sennacherib, by receiving this, and yet insisting on an absolute and unconditional surrender (avowedly, to be followed by deportation), acted with perfidy, as well as with cruelty and arrogance.

Obs. The tone of Sennacherib's addresses proves, beyond room for doubt, that he was urged on by other than political motives. He was bent on proving that Jehovah was only on the level of "the gods of the nations" (xxxvi. 18—20, xxxvii. 10—13, cp. xxxvii. 4). Nineveh, 150 years before, had heard an Israelite prophet threatening it with overthrow. The sentence had been averted by the repentance of the king and people. But Assyria had since then greatly advanced in power. Instead of being overthrown, she had consolidated an empire such as the world had never seen. Might she not now shake off her dread of that righteous God who called men to "turn from their evil way and from the violence that was in their hands" (Jonah iii. 8, 9)? Had not Asshur's deity proved himself, by the capture of Samaria, to be mightier than Israel's? Only one more evidence of this was needed,—the capture of Jerusalem,—and then the king of Assyria was undisputed lord of the world. (Cp. on x. 8.)

2. Rabshakeh is mentioned in 2 K. xviii. 17 along with Tartan and Rabsaris. No doubt, Tartan commanded the troops (xx. 1), while Rabshakeh was chief envoy.

by the conduit...]—the spot, where Ahaz had chosen deliberately to be the vassal of Assyria (vii. 2).

4. *to Hezekiah*] Rabshakeh nowhere calls him king.

wherein thou trustest] Rather, **wherewith thou art confident.** Rabshakeh thus bears witness to the fact that Hezekiah had learnt the lesson of xxx. 15.

Obs. The word for "confide" (in some of its forms) is found seven times in *vv.* 4—9; and recurs in *v.* 15 and xxxvii. 10.

5. *I say, sayest thou...*] Rather, *I say;* **It is *but* a word of the lips** (Prov. xiv. 23, *s. w.*), *Counsel and might for the war!* Sennacherib quotes Hezekiah's own words contemptuously.—"Counsel and might, forsooth! when he has just confessed his folly and weakness by sending me tribute!"

In 2 K. xviii. 20 it stands; "Thou sayest (it is but...)." The two forms are complementary.

Obs. There were "scornful men" enough

strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

[b] Ezek. 29. 6, 7.

6 Lo, thou trustest in the [b] staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?

[l] Or, *hostages.*

8 Now therefore give [l] pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

10 And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

11 ¶ Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it:* and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

12 ¶ But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

13 Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.

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in Judah (xxviii. 14) to report far and wide what Hezekiah said. The words themselves are very likely to have been used by Hezekiah. In 2 Chro. xxxii. 8, he is introduced as saying: "*With us* ('immanu,) *is the Lord our God*, to help us and to fight our battles:" as if alluding to the name, "Immanu-El." But HE was "*Counsellor*, the *mighty* GOD" (ix. 6); anointed with "the Spirit of *counsel and might*" (*s. w.*), xi. 2.

6. *this broken reed*] (xlii. 3, *s. w.*). Or, *this* **bruised cane**: seemingly firm, but really cracked, and ready to splinter, if any pressure be put upon it.—Sargon had inflicted a heavy blow on Egypt. It is not improbable that Tirhakah, though helping it against Assyria, had weakened it yet further.

The "cane" was especially abundant on the banks of the Nile (xix. 6).

if a man lean] *s. w. a.* in 2 Chro. xxxii. 8 (Hezekiah's address), and ch. xxvi. 3.

so is Pharaoh...] As Samaria had found, cp. xxx. 3.

7. *is it not he...*] Rabshakeh speaks here, as if he had been instructed by some of the apostate Israelites, who pretended to worship "the Lord" under the forms of heathen worship. To them Hezekiah was an irreverent iconoclast; a narrow-minded bigot, who thought himself in possession of *exclusive* truth.

Obs. In *v.* 10 Rabshakeh even claims to have been commissioned by "the Lord." Yet in *vv.* 18—20 he speaks of Him as if He were only an inferior national deity;—a sufficient proof of the insincerity of his previous professions.

8. *give pledges*]—binding thee to certain forfeitures, if the 2000 riders be not forthcoming.

9. *turn away the face of*] That is, refuse the request, or decline the overtures, of (1 K. ii. 16, 17, 20; 2 Chro. vi. 42). The words are satirical: "How canst thou decline the proposals made by one officer of our comparatively unimportant detachment from the great army,—and prefer relying on Egypt?"

10. *without the LORD*] This meant, apparently, "without authority from the Supreme Ruler of the gods;" of whom the Assyrian kings thought themselves to be the earthly representatives. Sennacherib, probably, like Timur, had come to look on himself as "the embodied anger of GOD." In one sense, he was so, liv. 16 (cp. x. 7).

to destroy] *s. w. a.* Exod. xii. 12; 1 Chro. xxi. 12; Jer. li. 20.

12. *hath he not sent me to...*] Or, "is it not because of the men that sit upon the wall, eating their own dung and drinking their own urine with you?" The sting of the coarse remark lay in the last words "with you."—A good reward, truly, for making common cause with you. They will have the privilege of *sharing with you* in the direst extremities of famine.

14 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you.

15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

16 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, ‖† Make *an agreement* with me *by* a present, and come out to me: and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;

‖ Or, *Seek my favour by a present.*
† Heb. *Make with me a blessing.*

17 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

18 *Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

19 Where *are* the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

20 Who *are they* among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?

21 But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

22 ¶ Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 *Hezekiah mourning sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them.* 6 *Isaiah comforteth them.* 8 *Sennacherib, going to encounter Tirhakah, sendeth a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah.* 14 *Hezekiah's prayer.* 21 *Isaiah's prophecy of the pride and destruction of Sennacherib, and the good of Zion.* 36 *An angel slayeth the Assyrians.* 37 *Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons.*

AND [a] it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with

[a] 2 Kin. 19. 1, &c.

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14. *deceive you*] with dreamy, fanatical, hopes (*s. w. a.* Jer. xxix. 8, xxxvii. 9).

16. *Make...a present*] Lit. "Make with me a blessing." The word for "blessing" is used in Gen. xxxiii. 11, 1 S. xxv. 27 of a present offered to an injured person as a sign of the offerer's wish to propitiate him. LXX. "If ye would be blest, come forth unto me."

17. *like your own land*]—only with this difference; that it would be a land *given them by him.* They would no longer be trammelled with the idea of their being "God's people." *He* would be their sovereign Lord. They might have corn and wine *ad libitum*, so long as they gave up their religious pretensions.

18. *persuade you*] Rather, **seduce** *you;*—from your allegiance to me. It is a very strong word: used of drawing men away into idolatry in Deut. xiii. 6 (H. 7); 1 K. xxi. 25.—Their highest regards (he means) were due to *him;* to "trust in the Lord" was to be guilty of rank apostasy.

the gods of the nations] Cp. x. 8—11.

19. *of Hamath and Arphad*] See x. 9. Sepharvaim (in southern Mesopotamia) and Hamath were among the places, to which the ten tribes were deported, 2 K. xvii. 24, 31.

and have they...] Lit. "and verily they have...:" all the world knows how they—the heathen gods—delivered Samaria. He assumes contemptuously that Samaria was religiously on a level with "the nations;"—which indeed in one sense was true:—and then places the sister-city on the same level.

20. *gods of these lands*]—each land having (in his view) its own tutelary deity.

the LORD] At length he speaks out his mind (see on *v.* 7).

21. *they held their peace*] It is the word used by Moses on the eve of that great Red-Sea deliverance (Exod. xiv. 14):—"*The Lord will fight for you*, and *ye shall hold your peace.*"

Obs. The former clause "the Lord will fight for you" had already been employed by Hezekiah; see above on *v.* 5.

answered him not] There was only One who could make effectual answer (Ps. xxxviii. 13—15).

22. *with their clothes rent*] in grief at the blasphemy they had heard (Matt. xxvi. 65).

sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the [1] household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of [1] blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that is [2] left.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will [1] send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold, thou hast heard what

[1] Or, *provocation.*

[2] Heb. *found.*

[1] Or, *put a spirit into him.*

CHAP. XXXVII. 1. *into the house of the* LORD] *v.* 14, xxxviii. 20, 22.

3. *of trouble*] *s. w. a.* xxvi. 17, xxxiii. 2.

and of rebuke] Or, "reproof;" Hos. v. 9, Hab. i. 12, *s. w.* Rabshakeh's insulting words were permitted by God, in reproof of the Assyrian policy of Ahaz.

of blasphemy] Cp. lii. 5; Ps. lxxiv. 10, 18 (*s. w.*). Or, "of contempt;"—God Himself seeming to scorn them (Deut. xxxii. 19; Lam. ii. 6). The latter sense appears to agree best with what follows.

the children...to bring forth] The time so long looked forward to, when it was hoped that God would change the travailing pains of Zion (xxvi. 17, 18) into joy, seemed likely to end fatally: as though Jerusalem, like Rachel, must die in child-birth (cp. lxvi. 9; Hos. xiii. 13; Micah iv. 10).

4. *the living God*] So in *v.* 17 (2 K. xix. 4, 16). This precise form (noun plur., adj. sing.) occurs nowhere else. (In Deut. v. 26; 1 S. xvii. 26; Jer. x. 10, xxiii. 36; Dan. vi. 26 the adj. is plur.: in Josh. iii. 10; Ps. xlii. 2, lxxxiv. 2; Hos. i. 10 the noun is sing.) It marks strongly the all-inclusive unity of the true God; the one Living GOD, who combines in Himself every perfection of excellence.

will reprove] *s. w. a.* xi. 4.

lift up thy *prayer*] Lit. "lift up prayer;" as if it were a hand raised to lay hold on the throne of mercy. (Cp. Exod. xvii. 12, 16.)

that is left] Or, "that is present;" which still *visibly* survives;—here in Judah. The ten tribes, also, had, in God's sight, a remnant (xi. 11, 16).

6. *servants*] Or, "young men."

blasphemed (or, reviled) *me*] The *Me* is emphatic. Their reviling is really directed at ME.

7. *send a blast upon him*] Or, "put a spirit within him" (Ezek. xxxvii. 6, 14; cp. xxix. 4, xxxviii. 4). Compare ch. xix. 14; 1 K. xxii. 23.

a rumour] Or, tidings (xxiii. 5, xxviii. 19, *s. w.*):—the report, first of the advance of Tirhakah, then, of the destruction of his own army. The promise is at first given in indefinite terms,—for Hezekiah's present encouragement. A fuller revelation will be given in answer to his later prayer.

8. *Libnah*] About 10 miles to the north of Lachish; on the way, it would seem, to the pass of Beth-horon (Josh. x. 10, 29, 31). He was, in any case, moving *nearer* to Jerusalem. (Cp. on xxxvii. 33.)

9. *Tirhakah*] Who had come to the help of Egypt. (Cp. on xviii. 2.)

Obs. Now, when Hezekiah relies not on Ethiopia, but on God only, Ethiopia is made to be an instrument in his deliverance.

the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Telassar?

13 Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

14 ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

17 Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the † nations, and their countries, † Heb. *Lands.*

19 And have † cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. † Heb. *given.*

20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.

21 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

22 This *is* the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel.

24 † By thy servants hast thou re- † Heb. *By the hand of thy servants.*

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11. *destroying them utterly*] Or, **devoting them**:—as if the edicts of the Assyrian kings had divine authority.

12. *Have the gods...*] Rather, **Did** *the gods of the nations*, **which** *my fathers destroyed* (*s. w. a.* xxxvi. 10), **deliver them**, *as Gozan*, etc.—Gozan (and so Ivah in *v.* 13) was one of the places to which Shalmaneser deported the ten tribes (2 K. xvii. 6; cp. on xxxvi. 19).

14. *spread it*]—thus appealing to the Supreme Judge (xxxiii. 22).

16. *God of Israel*] Hezekiah's words in 2 Chro. xxx. 1, 5.

dwellest between] Or, **sittest on**;—as upon a Throne (1 S. iv. 4): of which "righteousness and judgment" were the basis (xxxiii. 5; Ps. lxxxix. 14).

17. *thine ear...thine eyes*] As if pleading the promise in 2 Chro. vii. 15, 16.

18. *Of a truth, LORD*] Faith does not seek to evade any seemingly adverse facts urged by infidelity. The Assyrian's induction, as to the vanity of "the religions of the world," was correct; but it did not prove Hezekiah's affiance to be vain. Hezekiah's faith rested on a large area of positive historical facts, which no induction drawn from facts outside that area could touch. In reality, that induction was a confirmation of the faith. The Assyrian was God's instrument, by which He was commencing to fulfil His edict that "the idol-gods should be utterly abolished" (ii. 18).

laid waste] Lit. "dried up;" *s. w. a.* in *v.* 25 (xlii. 15, l. 2, li. 10).

20. *may know*] xlv. 6; 1 K. xviii. 37.

21. The king prayed in the temple. The prophet, in his seclusion, is instructed by the Hearer of prayer, what answer to convey.

The promise in xxx. 19 is fulfilled.

22. *The virgin, the daughter of Zion*] The faithful Church (see on i. 8).

at thee] Lit. **after** *thee*;—as if he were seen retreating.

23. *thy voice, and...on high? even*] The Hebr. punctuation is:—"*...thy voice? Thou* **hast even lifted up** *thine eyes on high against* (iii. 8), &c." Cp. xiv. 13, 14.

proached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down † the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, *and* ‖ the forest of his Carmel.

25 I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the ‖ besieged places.

26 ‖ Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it; *and* of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.

27 Therefore their inhabitants *were* † of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the housetops, and *as corn* blasted before it be grown up.

28 But I know thy ‖ abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me,

29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

30 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.

† Heb. *the tallness of the cedars thereof*, and *the choice of the fir trees thereof.*

‖ Or, *the forest* and *his fruitful field.*

† Or, *fenced and closed.*

‖ Or, *Hast thou not heard* how *I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? should I now bring it to be laid waste*, and *defenced cities* to be *ruinous heaps?*

† Heb. *short of hand.*

‖ Or, *sitting.*

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24. *hast said*] The language here is, probably, figurative. Jerusalem is "the height of the mountains" (cp. Ezek. xx. 40); her two sloping hills are "the sides (or, recesses, xiv. 13) of Lebanon;" the "tall cedars, &c." are her kings and princes, priests and prophets; the "height of his border" (or, **his furthermost** *height*), &c. is the temple. Cp. Jer. xxii. 6, 7.

What Lebanon was in regard of the land of Canaan physically, that Mount Zion was in regard of the nation as a spiritual community.

the forest of his Carmel]—the wooded height, which stands surrounded by vineyards and oliveyards (cp. Micah vii. 14).

25. He had overcome every natural impediment. In arid regions, he had *digged and drunk waters*, to enable him to maintain a siege. In lands like Egypt, or Babylonia, he had *dried up the* **streams** *of* **fortified places** (see on xix. 6; cp. 2 Chro. xxxii. 10).

26. His boastings are cut short by the voice of God.—*Hast thou not heard* (xl. 28)? **From of old made I this**, *from ancient* **days** *I formed it* (xxii. 11): *now I have brought it to pass.* Long ago,—seven hundred years previously,—God had foretold that He would "bring a nation from the end of the earth" to chastise unfaithful Israel (Deut. xxviii. 49:—the word rendered "fenced" being the same that is used here).

27. *dismayed and confounded*] The words used prophetically in xx. 5 had been verified in Samaria's overthrow.

as the grass...] Or, "as the herb of the field, as the green grass."

28. *But*] **And.** It is continuative of *v.* 26.—I appointed it long ago: and I notice every step thou takest in carrying out My plan. Cp. Ps. cxxxix. 1—3.

thy rage] Lit. "thy self-enraging."

29. *thy tumult*] (So Targ.) Better, "thy arrogance" (Symm.).

my hook] Reference is, probably, made to Job xli. 1, 2 (H. xl. 25, 26): cp. Ezek. xxix. 4. There are representations of prisoners led by a hook through the nose and lip in the bas-reliefs of Holwan and Khorsabad: which may, however, be symbolical.

30. *a sign*] Or, **the** *sign.* The address now reverts (*v.* 21) to Hezekiah. The prophet foretells that after two years they would resume the operations of husbandry, which had been suspended by the Assyrian war; and that this fact should be the *sign* of a yet higher blessing,—a restoration of the national covenant.

The nature of this sign depends on the import of the words, (1) *safiach*, "that which groweth of itself," (2) *shachis*, "that which springeth of the same."

The second of these words occurs only here and in the parallel place of 2 K. The first occurs also in Lev. xxv. 5, 11 (*only*); where it is prescribed that in the sabbatical and jubile years they should not sow the land, nor yet reap *that which grew of itself.* They were to "eat the increase *out of the field.*"

Now it seems impossible to interpret the prophet's words otherwise than as a reference to the above law. For the permission to eat *safiach* (corn or fruit as it was *in the field*), implied that the state of siege was at an end.

31 And [f] the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and [f] they that escape out of mount Zion: the [b] zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

33 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

35 For I will [c] defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

36 Then the [d] angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when

[f] Heb. *the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.*

[f] Heb. *the escaping.*

[b] 2 Kin. 19. 31. chap. 9. 7.

[c] 2 Kin. 20. 6.

[d] 2 Kin. 19. 35.

Why, then, should they not have returned to the cultivation of the land?—unless indeed the year were either sabbatic, or jubilaic. Evidently, then, the second year, in which they were to eat *shachis*, was a holy year. It was, probably, the jubile-year, B. C. 709. (Note A.)

We are not, indeed, told the length of time that Sennacherib remained in the country. But since he employed himself in taking "all the fortified cities of Judah," as a preliminary to his attack on Jerusalem; and some of these were remarkably strong fortresses (cp. on 2 K. xiv. 19), which may have occupied him almost as long as Samaria occupied Salmaneser; there is nothing improbable in supposing that the war had been going on three years before Sennacherib was prepared to make his final assault on Jerusalem (now, it would seem, on the verge of famine, xxxvi. 12). If so, the prophet's sign would actually be given in the sabbatical year B. C. 710.

Great, indeed, would be the significance of this event. For the jubile-year brought with it the assurance that the land could not be *alienated in perpetuity*, because it belonged to the Lord (Lev. xxv. 23). If any one had sold himself to a foreigner, and not been redeemed, then at the year of jubile he was to go out free: and that because the children of Israel were God's "servants," whom He had delivered out of the stage of bondage (ib. 54, 55).

Now Ahaz had formally made himself over as servant to the king of Assyria (2 K. xvi. 7). Hezekiah had endeavoured to emancipate himself from that servitude, but only involved himself in more grievous exactions from the enemy; who seemed bent on depriving him of every residue of his patrimony. Then it was that Isaiah bade him think of the approaching jubile, and take *that* as the SIGN of what God was about to do for him and for Judah. The "remnant should return" (see on viii. 18); for the law was, "In the year of the jubile *ye shall return* every man unto his possession" (Lev. xxv. 13).

31. *the remnant...*] Lit. "the escaping that remains" (cp. iv. 2, x. 20). The same words had been used by Hezekiah himself, 2 Chro. xxx. 6.

take root...bear fruit] This had been said of Israel (with a special reference, probably, to the ten tribes) in xxvii. 6. It should be more immediately fulfilled in Judah.

32. *shall go forth*]—to re-occupy its inheritance. Eventually to "go forth" and spread the knowledge of God among "all nations" (Matt. xxviii. 19).

they that escape] Lit. (*v.* 31), "an escaping." LXX. οἱ σωζόμενοι: cp. Acts ii. 40, 47.

the zeal] Or, *the* jealousy: see on ix. 7.

33. The scene of Sennacherib's overthrow is not mentioned. If, on leaving Libnah, he took a circuit by Beth-horon, hoping to surprise Jerusalem (x. 28 f.), it may have been actually at, or near, Nob (x. 32).

34. *By the way that he came*] Back again to Nineveh; not forward (from Jerusalem as his base) into Egypt.

35. *I will defend*] *s. w. a.* xxxi. 5.

for mine own sake]—to work out My own loving designs; xliii. 25, xlviii. 11.

for my servant David's sake] To accomplish the "sure mercies," which I promised him (lv. 3; Ps. lxxxix. 28).

36. *went forth, and smote*] Cp. Exod. xi. 4, xii. 12.

and when they arose...] The Destroyer had, it would seem, inflicted instant death. Those, who were spared, slept on till morning: and then for the first time became aware of what had taken place. It was no pestilence, then, but "the stroke of God." Life had been long extinct.

Accounts of this marvellous event were sure to be carried far and wide among the neighbouring nations. Egypt, which was expecting soon to be invaded by Sennacherib, would drink in the tidings with avidity. No wonder that the memory of it was still preserved after two centuries and a half; when Herodotus heard of Sennacherib's overthrow from the Egyptian priests (see on 2 K. xix. 35).

they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

37 ¶ So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of † Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

† Heb. *Ararat.*

Not the least striking point connected with that narrative is its mention of the piety of the king who was attacked, and of his going at the moment of peril into the temple. It shews, too, that even heathendom learnt from this event a lesson of reverence, writing over its monument (Herod. II. 141); "Let a man look at me, and be religious."

37. *So Sennacherib...*] The nominative to the first two verbs is, probably, Asshur;—from, "the camp of *Asshur*," in *v.* 36.—Render therefore; **So they departed,** *and* **went their way; and Sennacherib,** *king of Assyria, returned: and* **he** *dwelt.*

38. Brief as the historical record is, it presents us with a singularly vivid picture. The once triumphant conqueror now in his humiliation seeks help from his own special god (Sanskr. *ishta-deva*); whom, it would seem, he is worshipping without attendants. There he is slain by two of his own sons (one of whom bears the name of the Sepharvaite god, Adrammelech, 2 K. xvii. 31); and as a crime of so deep a dye can hardly have originated in anything short of fanaticism, we are led to suppose that they viewed the moody devotee as a traitor to his religion, or to their imperial house. Lastly, the parricides find an asylum in the highlands of Armenia; as if the region which had supplied the empire with some of its hardiest warriors (see on xxii. 6) had raised the standard of rebellion against the defeated monarch.

Obs. 1. The Medes, who (according to Herodotus, I. 95) first broke from the traditional supremacy of Assyria, were consolidated into a kingdom in B.C. 709;—the year after Sennacherib's defeat. (Cp. Introd. p. 7.)

Obs. 2. Delitzsch notices that Armenian tradition makes the two sons of Sennacherib to have been the founders of two leading clans, the Sassunian and the Arzerunian:—from the latter of which sprang the Armenian, who had ten Byzantine emperors among his descendants.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 30)

That the year B.C. 710 was *sabbatical*, may be seen: (1) By reckoning backward from data supplied by Josephus; who makes the years B.C. 164, 136, 38 to be sabbatical. Now if we add 78×7 (or, 546) to 164, we get 710. (2) By reckoning onward from the date of the first occupation of the land, B.C. 1444. For fifteen periods of 7×7 years amount to 735; and B.C. 710 is the 735th year from B.C. 1444. It follows, therefore, that the next year, B.C. 709, was a jubile-year.

Obs. A whole jubile period (or, forty-nine years) had elapsed since the Vision of the Seraphim; see on vi. 1. During this interval ten of the twelve tribes of Israel had been blotted from the map. Yet a fresh manifestation of Divine Power and Righteousness and Mercy had been also granted. Will Judah not abide now in loyal adherence to its God?—The next two chapters will supply an answer to the inquiry.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1 *Hezekiah, having received a message of death, by prayer hath his life lengthened.* 8 *The sun goeth ten degrees backward, for a sign of that promise.* 9 *His song of thanksgiving.*

IN [a] those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the

[a] 2 Kin. 20. 1. 2 Chron. 32. 24.

CHAP. XXXVIII. In ch. xxxvii we have seen Hezekiah going up to the house of the Lord to plead for his people, and receiving a gracious answer. The faith, which he exhibited at so terrible a crisis, cannot but appear surprising. It is true, that he had from the outset shewn remarkable strength of religious resolve: and that he had enjoyed the invaluable privilege of Isaiah's teaching. But even so, we feel that his confidence in God's readiness to deliver Jerusalem was extraordinary.

In the present chapter, great light is thrown on his whole conduct. Hezekiah's faith had been purified in the fire of personal affliction. It was a singular honour which was in reserve for him;—to be allowed to see the Assyrian conqueror overthrown in answer to his

LORD, † Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

† Heb. *Give charge concerning thy house.*

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,

3 And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept † sore.

† Heb. *with great weeping.*

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying,

5 Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

6 And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.

7 And this *shall be* a sign unto

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prayer. Was it not almost a *perilous* honour,—more than human nature could well bear? To guard to the utmost against this danger, Hezekiah was previously subjected to the severest spiritual discipline:—made to feel "the sentence of death in himself, that he should not trust in himself, but in God which raiseth the dead" (2 Cor. i. 9):—made to confess God's mercy in "casting all his sins" into oblivion (*v.* 17), and to admit that he ought up to the end of his days to look on himself as a monument of God's forbearance (*v.* 15). If, then, Jerusalem was delivered in answer to his supplication, this was plainly to be attributed not to any merit of his, but wholly to the same divine loving-kindness which had raised him "from the pit of corruption" (*v.* 17).

In *vv.* 5, 6, the two deliverances are coupled together in a way which suggests that they stood in some close relation to each other. Undoubtedly they did so. As Uzziah's excommunication coincided with the crisis in which sentence of banishment was pronounced on the nation, so Hezekiah's "sickness unto death" took place at the time when Jerusalem appeared to be at her last gasp in the hand of the Assyrian. King and people were both in a hopeless condition. Was it, then, to be the case, that he who had spent fourteen years, "in truth and with a perfect heart" labouring to reform Israel, should die without seeing any such manifestation of God's saving power as he had hoped for? Were the accumulated sins of his forefathers so mighty, that even divine love could not break through the curse they entailed? Not so. His malady—the "botch of Egypt" (see on *v.* 21)—should be miraculously healed; and he "should see YAH," the Saviour, "even YAH, in the land of the living" (*v.* 11);—working as mightily as when Pharaoh's host was overthrown.

1. *In those days*] The days of the Assyrian invasion. That it was in Hezekiah's *fourteenth year*, is evident; for we are told that fifteen years were added to his life, while the whole length of his reign was twenty-nine years. That it was prior to Sennacherib's overthrow may be fairly inferred from *v.* 6.

unto death] See on *v.* 21.

thou shalt die] *s. w. g.* Gen. xx. 3, "thou art *a dead man*;" Jer. xxviii. 16. That was certain to be the result of his sickness:—unless, indeed, some new antecedent, of a supernatural kind, were to be introduced into the chain of ordinary causation.

2. *prayed unto the LORD*] Had not Isaiah himself said (xxx. 19)—"He will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy cry; when He heard, He answered"?

3. *O LORD, I beseech thee*] *s. w. a.* Ps. cxvi. 4, 16.

in truth and with a perfect heart] As if pleading the promise made to Solomon, 1 K. ix. 4, 5 (cp. viii. 61, *s. w.*).

wept sore] (cp. xxx. 19). It would seem that Hezekiah was at this time childless: since Manasseh was only twelve years old at Hezekiah's death, 2 K. xxi. 1. Was David's line, then, to become extinct in one who had walked so closely in the steps of David's obedience?

5. *fifteen years*] In 2 K. xx. 5, 6 we read; "Behold I will heal thee. On the third day (cp. Hos. vi. 1) thou shalt *go up to the house of the Lord*. And I will add unto thy days *fifteen years*." The Jewish tradition is that there were fifteen steps in the ascent to the temple area (cp. Ezek. xl. 26, 31). Surely these fifteen years were meant to be to Hezekiah so many steps by which he was to mount towards the house of the Lord "not made with hands."

Obs. As Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his life, so the nation had fifteen more jubile-periods added to its term of existence; the last jubile falling in A.D. 26; the year in which our Lord read out Isai. lxi. 1, 2 ("to preach *the acceptable year of the Lord*") in the synagogue at Nazareth.

6. *thee and this city*] See Introd.

will defend] *s. w. a.* xxxi. 5, xxxvii. 35.

7. *a sign*] **the** *sign:*—the token that

thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken;

8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the † sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

† Heb. *degrees by, or, with the sun.*

9 ¶ The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

11 I said, I shall not see the LORD, *even* the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off ‖ with pining sickness: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

‖ Or, *from the thrum.*

13 I reckoned till morning, *that*, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

14 Like a crane *or* a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with looking* upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; ‖ undertake for me.

‖ Or, *ease me.*

God was willing to change on this occasion the ordinary working of natural law,

8. The stairs, or dial, may have been (like the *Mān-mandir* of Benares) a large structure; so that the motion of the shadow could be seen by the king through the window, as he lay on his couch.

I will bring again...] Lit. "I will make the shadow of the degrees which it hath gone down by the sun on the degrees of Ahaz, to return backward ten degrees." The verb "it hath gone down," both here and in the second half of the verse, seems to be impersonal. From 2 Chro. xxxii. 31, "the wonder done *in the land*," it has been inferred that the phenomenon was *local* in its nature, and confined to Judea. The miracle may have consisted in an alteration of the refractional conditions of the atmosphere.

Obs. The word for "backward" is the one used by Elijah in 1 K. xviii. 37 of the people's being *turned back* from idolatry. So the fifteen years added to Hezekiah's life might be looked on as a reversal of the gloomy fifteen which followed Ahaz's refusal of the sign offered to him by the prophet.

10. *I said*]—in my despondency; *v.* 11; cp. Ps. cxvi. 11.

in the cutting off] Or, "in the noon-tide;"—lit. the "pause," or, "rest;" as the sun appears to pause at the zenith.

go to the gates of the grave] Or, **enter the gates of Hades.**

deprived] as by a penal sentence; mulcted.

11. *I shall not see the* LORD] Hebr. YAH:—the Saviour; who delivered Israel at the Exodus (see on xii. 2, xxvi. 4). The LXX. has: "I shall no more see the salvation (τὸ σωτήριον) of God upon the earth of the living; I shall no more see the salvation of Israel upon the earth."

in the land of the living] On this earth; where the work of redemption is being carried on. Cp. *v.* 19.

with the inhabitants of the world]—this *transitory* world (as the word implies; cp. Ps. xxxix. 4; where the adj. occurs). Short at the best was human life for the work allotted to it, but *he* was not allowed even the ordinary period for his task.

12. *Mine age* (my life-period, cp. liii. 8, *s. w.*) *is* **removed** (from its site) *and* **carried off** *from me:*—leaving the spot, which it had covered with so much busy work, bare and silent.

I have cut off...] Rather, "**I had rolled up**, as a weaver, my life; **from the warp** He will cut me off" (Job vi. 9). His web, carefully woven, and rolled up as it advanced, has been but half finished; and it is to be suddenly cut in two.

13. *I reckoned*] Lit. "I laid it (before me)" (Ps. cxix. 30). The sickness filled his imagination with one vivid impression, that he was in the hands of a merciless and irresistible enemy.

14. *Like a crane...*] Rather, *as a* **swift** *or a* **crane** (Rashi, in Del.); whose harsh screams are associated in thought with their *migratory* character (Jer. viii. 7).

fail with looking *upward*] Or, **failed, looking toward the height;**—to Him "who dwelleth on the height" (*s. w.*), and had promised to "fill Zion with judgment and righteousness" (xxxiii. 5).

I am oppressed; undertake for me] He is like one who is in the hand of an exacting creditor (cp. lii. 4, liv. 14; Deut. xxviii. 29, 33; Ps. lxxii. 4), from whom there is but one hope of relief;—if God will "be surety for him" (*s. w. a.* Gen. xliii. 9, xliv. 32; Ps. cxix. 121—123).

15 What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it:* I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

16 O Lord, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

17 Behold, ‖ for peace I had great bitterness: but † thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death can *not* celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I *do* this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

20 The LORD *was ready* to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.

21 For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay *it* for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover.

‖ Or, *on my peace came great bitterness.*
† Heb, *thou hast loved my soul from the pit.*

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15. The appeal, made in the agony of self-despair, has been marvellously heard. He has had an express answer from God, in word and in fact. How fitting that he should—

go softly] as one who is marching in a solemn procession (Ps. xlii. 4, *s. w.*). Those fifteen years must be to him as one continuous ascent to God's Presence.

in the bitterness] Lit. "*upon* the bitterness." The memory of that deep grief shall be ever with him, *as a support* to pious reverence.

16. *by these things*]—which Thou speakest and doest (*v.* 15). Cp. Deut. viii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 19.

and in all these things] Rather, *and wholly in them* (lxiv. 5, H. 4; cp. Job xxii. 21).

17. *for peace*] Not for my hurt, but with a view to my obtaining true peace. (So Knob.) Cp. Jer. xxix. 11. Theod. εἰς εἰρήνην.

thou hast in love..from] Or, "Thou hast lovingly drawn my soul out of." Lit. (see marg.) *hast loved my soul out of...*:—as if the love of God, shining on the soul, had made it ascend out of the power of death.

hast cast all my sins (Micah vii. 19) *behind thy back* (Neh. ix. 26)] so that they are lost sight of for ever. When he pleaded for mercy, he urged strongly his uprightness of purpose, *v.* 3. Now after the mercy has been granted, he speaks of "all his sins": God's exceeding goodness making him more deeply sensible of his shortcomings.

18. *the grave cannot...*] More nearly, "It is not Hades that giveth Thee thanks, or Death that praiseth Thee." They are in their own nature penal; and testify of man's sin.

they that go down into the pit...] whose doom is fixed. It is sometimes inferred from this passage, that Hezekiah looked on the condition of the faithful departed as one of comfortless gloom. But his words, taken in connexion with the history, mean only this:—that if, after having laboured so many years to recover Judah, he were now swept away by death, as one who was unforgiven, (his people, too, in spite of Isaiah's promises, being given over to the Assyrians,) then—how could he, or they, take part in God's praises? If God's faithfulness and mercy were to be obscured and hidden away from *the living*,—if all evidence of an actual, historical, kind were to be withdrawn,—how could they, who went hence under such proofs of God's displeasure, hope to praise Him in (what would *then* be) a state of condemnation? This feeling was no way inconsistent with a full persuasion that, when "the righteous man" is taken away, *he shall enter into peace* (lvii. 1, 2).

19. *The living*] who has had present experience of Thy mercy.

20. *The LORD was ready...*] Or, "is ready..." See xxxvii. 35.

in the house] Or, "before the house." LXX. κατέναντι.

21. This and the following verse stand as a commentary on the last line of the hymn: where Hezekiah speaks with so much gratitude of being able to take part in the temple-psalmody.

We here learn that his malady was a special one, marked by the sign of *leprosy* (*shechin*). Besides the present verse (and the parallel passage 2 K. xx. 7) the only places where this word occurs are, (*a*) Exod. ix. 9—11; of the Egyptian plague of "boils." (*b*) Lev. xiii. 18—20; of the boil, out of which leprosy sprang. (*c*) Deut. xxviii. 27, 35; of the "botch of Egypt," and the "sore botch that cannot be healed." (*d*) Job ii. 7; of the "sore boils," with which Job was smitten.—Such being the disease, the first question was, Could Hezekiah hope to recover? On human grounds he could not. But Isaiah assured him that he should. Then a second question

22 Hezekiah also had said, What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1 *Merodach-baladan, sending to visit Hezekiah because of the wonder, hath notice of his treasures.* 3 *Isaiah, understanding thereof, foretelleth the Babylonian captivity.*

[a] 2 Kin. 20. 12, &c.

[a] AT that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered.

2 And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his ‖ precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his ‖ † armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

‖ Or, *spicery.*

‖ Or, *jewels.* † Heb. *vessels,* or, *instruments.*

3 ¶ Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee?

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arose; What if he were to escape death, only to become afflicted, like Uzziah, with chronic leprosy, and to be "cut off from the house of the Lord"? This doubt was set at rest by the special sign of the Sun-shadow; for we are told in *v.* 22 that Hezekiah had asked for a sign to assure him on this point. This, then, was the reason why, in the concluding line of his hymn, he spoke so thankfully about visiting the house of the Lord.

The whole chapter now receives fresh light. It was no weak love of life that moved Hezekiah to tears. It was, because he, who had followed after God with so much sincerity, appeared to be stricken with the penalty foreordained to disobedience. That was what made the stroke so "exceeding bitter." He was not to witness that great exhibition of God's truth and mercy towards which the faithful had been directing their gaze for almost 30 years. If he were to be thus excluded from a share in the present joy of God's people, what hope could he have of partaking in their future blessedness? If he were shut out of God's earthly house, what guarantee could he have of admission to the Holy Place on high?

Obs. Upright Hezekiah,—so highly commended in sacred history, 2 K. xviii. 5, 6,—had a burden of guilt, from which only God's "love to his soul" absolved him. *He* could not stand as the "Righteous Servant," who should "justify many" by "bearing their iniquities" (liii. 11). And if he could not, what child of man could?—This lesson is further enforced by ch. xxxix.

CHAP. XXXIX. We are not told what time elapsed between the deliverance of Jerusalem and the visit of the Babylonian envoys. The interval was long enough to have enabled Hezekiah to replenish his treasury;—partly, no doubt, by help of the "gifts" brought him from surrounding nations (2 Chro. xxxii. 23).

1. *Merodach-baladan*] The first part of the name is the title of a Babylonian deity (Jer. l. 2). The avowed motive of the mission was to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery. In 2 Chro. xxxii. 31 it is put more generally;—"to inquire of *the wonder* that was done in the land:"—which is, perhaps, large enough to include the whole history of chh. xxxvi—xxxviii.

2. *was glad of them*] Rather, **rejoiced because of them.** He had stood firm against the Assyrian; and against the advocates of the Egyptian alliance. But here a subtler temptation was presented. The king of Babylon now volunteered to shew him respect, *because of the honour which God had put upon him and his land.* Was not this a thing he might well rejoice in? Could there be aught wrong in listening to the friendly communications of these envoys? Was it not a ground for reasonable self-congratulation that he would have so powerful an ally in case of any future Assyrian attack? So he fell away from his simplicity of faith.

The explanation is given in 2 Chro. xxxii. 31. In this matter, "God left him, *to try him,* that he might know all that was in his heart" (cp. 1 K. viii. 39).

the house of his precious things...his house] In strong contrast with the last chapter.—The memory of that great "bitterness," which was to have made *God's house* supremely dear to him, has grown dim.

the precious ointment] In the only other place (beside 2 K. xx. 13) where the phrase occurs, it is used of the holy consecrating oil (Ps. cxxxiii. 2; cp. Jer. vi. 20).

3. The first of the two questions put by Isaiah received no answer. Were their overtures such as Hezekiah shrank from repeating in Isaiah's presence? Did they refer to an *alliance* with Babel?—The answer to the second question reminds us of 1 K. viii. 41: "Also concerning the stranger, which...*cometh from a far country* for Thy name's sake, (for *they shall hear of Thy great name and strong hand* and stretched out arm,) and shall

And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, *even* from Babylon.

4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts:

6 Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and *that* which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

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come and *pray towards this house.*" Hezekiah had now an opportunity of leading these foreigners to honour that Name; but his heart was too occupied with "his own house, and his realm."

6. *all that is in thine house*] 2 Chro. xxxvi. 18.

7. *shall be eunuchs*] (lvi. 3, 4). This could not apply to his eldest son Manasseh, or to another son, Amariah, who was great-grandfather to the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. i. 1). But other sons would probably be carried away to Babylon along with Manasseh (2 Chro. xxxiii. 11). At a later period we are told of children "of the king's seed" (Dan. i. 3), who became eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

8. *Good is the word...*] good and kind amidst its severity. (Cp. 1 S. iii. 18.)

in my days] Or, "throughout my days" (*s. w. a.* Ps. cxvi. 2). Hezekiah recognized that this was far more than he deserved (cp. 2 Chro. xxxii. 26). There should be *peace;* securing his people against external enemies: and *truth,* so that "the old loving-kindnesses sworn to David" (Ps. lxxxix. 49) should not as yet disappear. That is all he can now look for. The Church must wait long for the coming of Him, who shall give "abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth" (Ps. lxxii. 7; Jer. xxxiii. 6).

* * * *

Such is the termination of that great cycle of prophetic ministry. Isaiah's labour, continued for fifty years, has issued in a new proof of God's righteous government of the world, of His care for those who obey Him, but also of the inability of Israel under the Legal economy to work out deliverance for mankind. Assyria, specially prepared by God to be an instrument for chastising idolatrous Israel, has been "broken" (xiv. 25) for its self-glorifying pride. Hezekiah, exhibiting a degree of loyalty to God, which reminds us of the best days of David, had been wonderfully rescued. Yet this display of the divine character, aided by the clear teaching of Isaiah, and sealed to Hezekiah personally by a miraculous recovery from a fatal malady, did not prevent Hezekiah from falling away, as David had done (Ps. xxx. 6, 7), through self-confidence. This failure must have caused Isaiah the deepest grief. Not, indeed, that he had ever deceived himself as to the nation's future. From the outset, he had been taught to look forward to a severe judicial visitation as the only means by which Israel could be purified. He knew that Jerusalem must be laid in the dust (iii. 26); that the vine of Judah must be cut down (v. 5, xi. 1); that the land must be forsaken (vi. 11). We see nowhere any variation respecting this. Isaiah did not take Hezekiah to be the "Sure Foundation" of Zion, the "Righteous King," the "Prince of Peace." He had long ago learnt to "cease from man" (ii. 22). He and the body of "disciples" that adhered to him,—the Messianic Church,—had only one main hope; which was, the coming of Immanuel in a yet distant future, for which they were to "wait" (viii. 17) with patience of faith. Yet, while Isaiah did not expect of Hezekiah that he should reverse Israel's national sentence, he might well have hoped that the fifteen years added to the king's life would have been spent in devoted service to his great Benefactor. When, therefore, "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him" (2 Chro. xxxii. 25); when he even found self-complacent satisfaction in the proffered alliance of Babel; the prophet would have been more than human, if he had not suffered bitter anguish at such a fall:—anguish, not the less keen because he delivered his message to the king with a self-repression befitting God's ambassador. Must he, then, henceforth sit down in silent grief? Not so. He had long ago been commissioned to foretell Babel's overthrow (xiii. 19, xxi. 9) and Zion's salvation (xii. 2, xxvi. 1—4). He is now inspired to declare the circumstances of these events with much greater definiteness, and, at the same time, to rise out of these subordinate

CHAPTER XL.

1 The promulgation of the gospel. 3 The preaching of John Baptist. 9 The preaching of the apostles. 12 The prophet by the omnipotency of God, 18 and his incomparableness, 26 comforteth the people.

COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

transactions to speak of a higher order of things, which should stretch forward into eternity. Nothing short of this complex revelation was suited to the wants of the Church.

Hezekiah's failure was the crowning proof that the blessing, which was to come to all nations through Abraham's seed, could not be realized under the Mosaic dispensation. It could not be brought about in the way of a progressive amelioration of mankind under the discipline of the Law. There were tendencies in man's soul which could not be so eradicated. There was an ever-increasing load of sin, pressing on the world, which could not be removed by man. Inside the sphere of the Law, as well as outside it, "All flesh was as grass" (xl. 6)—fading away beneath "the burning heat" (James i. 11) of eternal justice.

The flames that burnt up Solomon's temple appeared to leave the world universally and hopelessly under the dominion of evil,—of sin and its attendant curse. How, then, was the Empire of Sin to be overthrown? This is the question to be answered by the Second Part of Isaiah's prophecies.

CHAPS. XL—LXVI. The substance of these chapters is contained in the first five verses of ch. xl. It consists of two principal elements:—(1) Jerusalem's "iniquity is pardoned:" (2) "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

Throughout the First Part, Jerusalem's fall was attributed to her sin. How then was that sin to be atoned for? Who would perform for Israel in real act that which the seraph had done for Isaiah in symbolic vision (vi. 7)? The central chapter of Part II tells us, that the atonement will be made by a Righteous Person, the Lord's Servant, who will be "a man of sorrows," and take upon Him the guilt of transgressors, that He may procure their acquittal (liii. 11, 12). This Person is spoken of, in lii. 13, as "high and lifted up and very exalted;" the terms being the same that are applied to JEHOVAH in vi. 1 and v. 16.

Here, then, is reproduced, in a yet more astonishing form, that mystery of Part I, which spoke of a human child, who should be Immanuel,—God taking part with us. In Part II the mystery is intensified to the last degree. In liii. 10 we are told that this Divine Person is "bruised" and "put to grief," and His soul made a sin-offering. In xliii. 25 this work of atonement is attributed to the Lord Himself; "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for My own sake;" while in the preceding verse (xliii. 24) we read, "thou (Israel) hast *made Me to serve* [reduced me to servitude] by thy sins."—So only could a new Israel be created, through whom all nations should be blessed. In order that the "Prince of Peace" (ix. 6) may establish His Kingdom, He must bear in His own person the "chastisement of our peace" (liii. 5). Thus at length "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed;" and all the ends of the earth recognize Him to be "a *just* God and *a Saviour*" (xlv. 21).

Such is the solution of the principal question, How may Israel, and in Israel mankind, be recovered from the power of SIN? But incidentally another question is dealt with: How may that outward sign of the enemy's triumph, the prostration of Jerusalem, be removed? Is it *possible*, that Judah should be released from the grasp of Babylon?—The prophet answers boldly, that it is; and that God has provided one who shall fulfil the sentence which has already (chh. xiv, xxi) been recorded against the all-victorious city. In the fulfilment of this earlier prophecy all might see both a type and an earnest of the future great redemption.

Many moderns (following Rückert) have divided the Second Part into three sections; the first two of which both terminate with the words, "There is no peace...to the wicked" (xlviii. 22, lvii. 21). There is much that is attractive in this division; especially, its symmetry. For each of the three sections may be made, without difficulty, to resolve itself into nine sub-sections (generally, coincident with the chapters); and the midmost sub-section of all is the fifty-third chapter.—But the arrangement is scarcely borne out by facts. Chh. lvi and lvii seem to belong much more to those that follow them, than to those that precede; and there is a far more decided break at the end of chh. lv and lxii than at the end of lvii. Indeed so little did the synagogue recognize any break at all in the latter place, that they took as the Haftarah for the Day of Atonement lvii. 14—lviii. 14.

Relinquishing, then, the idea of symmetry, we find that ch. xl stands as an introduction; that the predominant subject of chh. xli—xlviii is the recovery of Israel from its sin, and from its bondage to Babylon which was the consequence of sin: that chh. xlix—lv speak of the foundation of a new and everlasting covenant by the Servant of the Lord, who has become "leader and commander of the peoples" (lv. 4); while the remaining chapters contain an earnest and prolonged address to the Jews, calling them to repentance and

2 Speak ye † comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her ‖ warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

3 ¶ [a] The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made ‖ straight, and the rough places ‖ plain:

5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together:

† Heb. *to the heart.*

‖ Or, *appointed time.*

[a] Matth. 3. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. John 1. 23.

‖ Or, *a straight place.*

‖ Or, *a plain place.*

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faith; and pointing them to the glory which is in reserve for the future City of God.

CHAP. XL. The sentence in xxxix had been delivered with unflinching sternness. But the voice of divine compassion is speedily heard comforting the mourners. Let not Zion say, she is *forgotten* of God. He marshals all the host of heaven; and the earth is but an atom before Him: yet He has a tender care for His frail human creatures. Jerusalem's penitence shall be accepted. He Himself will visit our world, and all flesh shall behold His glory.

1. *Comfort ye*] The LXX. supplies, "ye priests:" the Targ. (better), "ye prophets." The real Comforter was God Himself, xii. 1, xlix. 13, li. 3, 12.

my people] who "are gone into captivity" (v. 13). Cp. Exod. iii. 7, 10; ch. xxvi. 20.

saith (i. 11, 18, *s. w.*) *your God*] Still unchangingly theirs, Lev. xxvi. 44; Gen. xvii. 8.

2. *comfortably to*] Lit. "upon the heart of;" so as to quiet her anxiety (*s. w. a.* 2 Chro. xxx. 22, xxxii. 6). In Gen. l. 21 the expression is applied to Joseph, when he comforted his brethren who asked him to "forgive their trespass." (Cp. on xxix. 22, lxiv. 12.)

cry unto her] as authorized heralds of her King (lviii. 1).

that (or, for) *her warfare is accomplished*] Or, "her service is fulfilled:" the long period of hardship and drudgery (Job vii. 1, xiv. 14), during which she has borne the brunt of the enemy's attacks. Cp. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand:" Mark i. 15.

that (or, for) *her iniquity is pardoned*] Or, "her guilt is accepted." It is a remarkable phrase, which occurs besides only in Lev. xxvi. 41, 43; where it is used of Israel's "accepting their guilt"; that is, fully and submissively acknowledging it. The "pardon" is God's gracious act *consequent upon* man's thus acquiescing in the truth respecting himself.—So, when the Jewish Church "accepted its guilt" in the person of Daniel (Dan. ix. 5, 8, 18), the angel "flew swiftly" to announce the coming "reconciliation for iniquity."

Obs. As in ch. i we had Lev. xxvi. 14—33 reproduced; so in ch. xl we have Lev. xxvi. 41, 43.

hath received of the LORD'S hand] The idea is still (as in the two preceding clauses) that of Jerusalem's submissive *acceptance* of what was assigned her; cp. Jer. xxv. 28.

double for all her sins] Cp. Jer. xvi. 18, xvii. 18. It was the ordinary rule under the law that "for all manner of trespass" a man condemned by the judges should "pay double," Exod. xxii. 9, H. 8.—But that "double" punishment was light indeed, when compared with the superabounding mercy which was in store for her (liv. 7, 8).

3. In *v.* 2 the heralds were bidden to make proclamation. At once such a herald's voice is heard; *the voice of* one *that crieth in the wilderness*;—in the waste places of Zion (lxiv. 10), in the wilderness of the world (xxi. 1, xxxv. 1). The prophet had before heard "the voice of them that cried" in God's temple, saying; "His glory is the fulness of all the earth" (vi. 3, 4). Now that great consummation is about to begin (*v.* 5).

the way of the LORD] (Mal. iii. 1)—"the way of holiness" (xxxv. 8). John the Baptist's preaching *in the wilderness of Judæa* was both in outward history and in spiritual significance a fulfilment of the text:—just as our Lord's miraculous cures were of xxxv. 5, 6: which is linked on to xl. 4—10 by our Lord's answer to John in Matt. xi. 2—5.

4. Then justice shall raise the lowly, and depress the haughty (cp. ii. 12, 14).

the crooked shall be made straight] The Hebrew words correspond respectively to the names *Jacob* and *Jeshurun*. "Tunc Jacob Israel...efficietur." (On the moral significance of the former word, cp. Jer. xvii. 9, ix. 4, H. 3; and of the latter, ch. xi. 4.)

plain] Lit. "a plain;" or, a smooth and open valley.

5. *the glory of the LORD*] Cp. xxxv. 2, lxvi. 18, vi. 3. The "revealing," begun at the First Advent of Christ (John i. 14, ii. 11; 2 Pet. i. 16), is to be completed at the Second (Matt. xvi. 27).

all flesh] In John xvii. 2 the manifestation of God's glory in Christ is connected with the fact that He has "power over *all flesh*."

together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? [b] All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodliness thereof *is* as the flower of the field:

7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the [c] word of our God shall stand for ever.

9 ¶ ‖ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; ‖ O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come ‖ with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, [d] his reward *is* with him, and ‖ his work before him.

11 He shall [e] feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his

[b] Job 14. 2. Psal. 102. 11. & 103. 15. James 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 24.

[c] John 12. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 25.

‖ Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion.*

‖ Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem.*

‖ Or, *against the strong.*

[d] chap. 62. 11.

‖ Or, *recompence for his work.*

[e] Ezek. 34. 23. John 10. 11.

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shall see it together] Cp. Rev. i. 7.—The LXX. paraphrase; "shall see the salvation (τὸ σωτήριον) of God" (quoted by St Luke, iii. 6). Cp. lii. 10; Luke ii. 30.

The LXX. used the same words in xxxviii. 11;—a very noticeable antithesis.

the mouth of the LORD...] *s. w. a.* i. 20. Long ago the unalterable decree had been uttered, Num. xiv. 21.

6. *The voice said*] Rather, *The voice* **of one that saith**;—the voice probably being, as in vi. 8, that of the Lord Himself.

And he said] Or, "And one said." One of the heralds, bidden to proclaim that "all flesh shall see the glory of God," wonders at the greatness of the message. "What is this that I am to proclaim?—seeing that all flesh has corrupted its way, and become subject to shame and death."

grass] li. 12; Ps. xc. 5.

all the goodliness thereof] Similarly the LXX., Vulg. and most commentators; though the word nowhere else has that sense: (*s. w. a.* Hos. vi. 4; "Your *goodness* is as a morning cloud.")—Even the best of the kings, David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah, had failed.

7. *withereth...fadeth...bloweth*] Rather, **is withered** (*s. w. a.* xv. 6)...**is faded away...hath blowed.**

the spirit of the LORD] The Spirit of Holiness; which, even while it is carrying out the scheme of mercy, causes that which is unholy to perish.

the people] Israel. Or, as in xlii. 5, mankind. (So Aben-Ezra, Del., &c.)

8. This appears to be a reply (uttered, perhaps, by the prophet) to the desponding words of *vv.* 6, 7. *The Word of our God* (cp. *v.* 5) *shall stand* (xiv. 24, xlvi. 10) *for ever*. Cp, lv. 11.

9. *O Zion, that...*] Rather (as in marg.), **O thou that tellest** *good tidings* **to Zion ...O thou** (etc.) **to Jerusalem.** (So LXX., Targ., Vulg., Rashi, Ges., Knob.) In favour of this observe, (1) that in xli. 27, Zion and Jerusalem are the *receivers* of glad tidings; cp. lii. 7: (2) that the "cities of Judah" in the third clause are thus brought into parallelism with Jerusalem, as in xliv. 26; Ps. lxix. 35; Jer. vii. 17; ix. 11, H. 10; xxv. 18.—The *good tidings* is the fulfilment of the "word of the Lord" (*vv.* 5, 8). The "evangelistress" is the Church (A. E.). Cp. Ps. lxviii. 11.

Behold your God!] *i.e.* "Lo, here is your God." He is come.

10. *the Lord* GOD] **the Lord Jehovah:** vii. 7, lxi. 1.

with strong hand] Or, "as a strong one" (*s. w. a.* xxviii. 2); manifesting His strength. Others, "with a strong one" (construction as in Num. xx. 20).

and his arm shall rule for him] Or, "and His own arm getteth Him rule." Cp. Ps. xcviii. 1. Both in lii. 10, and liii. 1, the "Arm of the Lord" appears to designate the "Servant of the Lord." In liii. 1, this "arm" is "revealed,"—as here the "glory of the Lord" is (*v.* 5).

his reward...his work] The two words are used indifferently of the "wages" of a labourer; see Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 15. Both here, therefore, and in lxii. 11 (as also in xlix. 4), the marginal rendering, *recompence*, is preferable to "work."—Israel's long servitude (cp. *v.* 1) had been seemingly fruitless. Now the God of Israel has appeared; has "laid bare His holy arm" (lii. 10); has gathered around Him a flock (as Jacob did in Aram, Gen. xxx. 28, 33) to be His "reward" and "recompence." These are now "with Him," "before Him," as Jacob's flocks were on his return, Gen. xxxii. 21. (This reference is made almost certain by the next verse.—So, too, Forerius.)

11. His omnipotence is united with the tenderest loving-kindness (lxiii. 9—11; cp. Gen. xlviii. 15; Ps. xxiii. 1).

bosom, *and* shall gently lead those
‖ Or, *that give suck.* ‖ that are with young.

12 ¶ Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth
† Heb. *a tierce.* in †a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

13 *f* Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or *being* † his counsellor hath taught him?

14 With whom took he counsel, and *who* † instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of † understanding?

15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

16 And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.

17 All nations before him *are* as *g* nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

18 ¶ To whom then will ye *h* liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

19 The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

f Wisd. 9. 13. Rom. 11. 34. 1 Cor. 2. 16.
† Heb. *man of his counsel.*
† Heb. *made him understand.*
† Heb. *understandings?*
g Dan. 4. 35.
h Acts 17. 29.

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gather the lambs]—which had been *scattered* from the flock; Jer. xxiii. 3, xxxi. 10.

shall gently lead (*s. w. a.* xlix. 10; Ps. xxiii. 2) *those that are with young*] Or, "that give suck;" *s. w. a.* Gen. xxxiii. 13; Ps. lxxviii. 71.

12. Does it seem strange that Infinite Wisdom should be capable of thus attending to the minute concerns of men? Nay, rather, is not the plenitude of His Wisdom seen precisely in this, that nothing in the vast universe, however small, can escape His cognizance?

Who hath measured...] Did man?—Was his narrow "span" (Exod. xxviii. 16, *s. w.*) the unit of the measures in which the dimensions of heaven were laid down? Did he with his instruments adjust the equilibrium of the earth? If man cannot do these outward things, much less can he fathom the depths of God's moral government, or balance the mysteries of His scheme of Redemption.—It is the argument of the 'Analogy.'

13. *directed*] The word that was rendered "meted out" in *v.* 12.—Who assigned Him the limits of His operations; marking out, when He was to brood over the formless waste with life-giving energy (cp. Gen. i. 2), when to breathe in displeasure over corrupt creation, so that it should wither away (*vv.* 7, 24)?

St Paul refers to this verse at the end of his survey of God's dealings with Israel, Rom. xi. 34. In the course of the discussion in chh. ix—xi he quotes Isai. i. 9, vi. 9, viii. 14, x. 22, 23, xxviii. 16, 22, liii. 1, lxv. 1, 2, to illustrate Israel's fall; and xxvii. 9, lii. 7, lix. 20, as evidence of their final recovery. (Cp. also Rom. xi. 33 with *v.* 28 below.)

The reference to this verse in 1 Cor. ii. 16 concludes an apologetic discourse in which the Apostle had alluded to Isai. viii. 14, xxix. 14, xxxiii. 18, xliv. 25, lxiv. 4. (Cp. also 1 Cor. ii. 6 with *v.* 23 below.)

14. *and* who *instructed him...*] Or, "that he might instruct Him... and teach...and shew...". What *man* did He consult?—His "counsellor" none could be, save One who was "The Mighty God" (ix. 6).

15. The *nations*, whom Israel had dreaded as if they were mightier than God, were to Him but *as a drop* hanging on *a bucket*. He *lifts up*, and carries, *the isles*, or maritime lands, *like* **thin dust**; as easily as the atmosphere bears up the motes of a sunbeam.

16. Israel, confounding material and spiritual greatness, had despised God's altar, and gone away to offer sacrifice on lofty mountain-peaks. Nay: — what real propitiation could be effected, though the whole region of Lebanon were made an altar, its pines and cedars piled up on it for firing, and its thousands of beasts offered as victims?—Very different was the Offering which was to procure man's redemption.

17. *less than nothing*] Cp. xli. 24; Ps. lxii. 9. Their moral corruption makes them like negative quantities in the sum of created good.

18. In the light of these truths, how monstrous appeared the folly of those who made an image to represent or symbolize Deity!

The argument against idolatry recurs several times in chh. xl—xlviii. Doubtless these chapters helped greatly to bring about that freedom from polytheism, which has marked the Jewish people ever since the restoration from Babylon. Cp. above, p. 10.

19. *melteth a graven image*] Or, "casteth an image;"—of lead, or iron, or brass.

† Heb. is *poor of oblation.*

20 He that †*is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved.

21 Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

‖ Or, *Him that sitteth, &c.*

22 ‖ *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that

[i] Psal. 104. 2.

[i] stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

[k] Job 12. 21. Psal. 107. 40.

23 That bringeth the [k] princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

24 Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth.

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20. If a man be too poor to offer a costly image, he thinks to make up for the want of intrinsic value by an increase in solid bulk.

21. *Have ye not known?...*] Or, "Have ye no knowledge? Have ye no hearing?" Does not uncorrupt reason, and still more the Divine Word, tell you the folly of this?

told you from the beginning] *s. w. a.* xli. 4. The pronoun comes in emphatically at the end: "Has it not been declared from the beginning TO YOU?"—to you, Israelites.

have ye not understood from...] Or, "have ye not considered the foundations of the earth (Prov. viii. 29)?" For God's "eternal power and Godhead" are "clearly seen" standing forth "from the world's creation" (Rom. i. 20).—So LXX. and Vulg.; Knob., Del.

22. **He** *that sitteth...*(*v.* 23) *that bringeth...*] No direct assertion is made concerning Him. An allusion to some of His doings is sufficient. There is no need to add,—"Is this, then, He whom you represent by your imbecile idol?"

the circle (*s. w. a.* Job xxii. 14; Prov. viii. 27) *of the earth*] The hemisphere, in whose centre the earth appears to be placed.

as a curtain]—of thin muslin or gauze.

23. *princes...judges of the earth*] *s. w. a.* Ps. ii. 2, 10.

he maketh...as vanity] Hebr. TOHU; a formless waste. (Jer. iv. 23.) All the order and beauty which once existed in the domain of civil and ecclesiastical law was gone. (Cp. 1 Cor. ii. 6: "The princes of this world that come to nought.")

24. *Yea, they shall not...*] None of the verbs, except the last, are future: "*Yea, they* **have not been planted**." (or, "were never planted"), &c. As in *v.* 7, our thoughts are carried chiefly to Judah. Men might have supposed that David was to be *the plant of renown* (Ezek. xxxiv. 29); that Solomon's line was to be *the seed the Lord had blessed* (ch. lxi. 9); that Hezekiah was the *rod from the stock of Jesse* (xi. 1);—but none of these proved to be so. **And moreover He breathed** *upon them* (Exod. xv. 10 *s. w.*) *and they* **withered**. The same was true of Israel at large.—The contrast is supplied in lx. 21, lxi. 11. (Cp. Matt. xv. 13.)

25. *saith the Holy One*] This is the final distinction between God and the creature:—not His illimitable power and wisdom, but His absolute and essential holiness. To think that the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth should for one moment have been joined with that of the "Holy One"!

26. *and behold who hath created these*] Or, **and see; Who created these?** What sort of a Being must He be!

he calleth them all **by name**] as soldiers summoned by a muster-roll;—or (John x. 3) as sheep addressed by a shepherd. This He does, **through greatness of might, and being** *strong in power* (Job ix. 4). Only Omnipotence could produce such orderly obedience.

not one faileth] Or, **is missing** (xxxiv. 16). So should it be with His human flock (*v.* 11). "None should perish" (John x. 28).

When Abraham was yet childless, he was bidden to look at the starry heavens, and to believe that "so should his seed be" (Gen. xv. 5). Widowed and desolate Zion is now to imitate his faith. Cp. li. 1, 2.

Obs. Isai. xl. 27—xli. 16 is the Haftarah to Gen. xii. 1—xvii. 27.

27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

28 ¶ Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? [i] *there is* no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall [†] renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

[i] Psal. 147. 5.

[†] Heb. *change.*

CHAPTER XLI.

1 *God expostulateth with his people, about his mercies to the church,* 10 *about his promises,* 21 *and about the vanity of idols.*

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27. *O Jacob...O Israel*] Thou, who in that long night-agony saidst, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me;" why sayest thou now, "I am bereaved" (Gen. xxxii. 26, xliii. 14)?—The "missing" one, Joseph, was even then the world's benefactor.

hid from the LORD] Covered by so dense a mass of misery, that even His light (from which "nothing is hid," Ps. xix. 6) could not penetrate.

is passed over] Rather, **will pass away**, —unnoticed, unvindicated.

28. *the everlasting God*] Cp. Gen. xxi. 33; Deut. xxxiii. 27.

neither is weary] From all eternity He knew the greatness of the labour which was involved in His loving scheme of redemption. Cp. vii. 13, xliii. 24, liii. 11.

there is no searching (*s. w. a.* Ps. cxlv. 3; Job v. 9)...] Or, "His understanding is unsearchable." (Cp. Ps. cxlvii. 5; the preceding verse being parallel to *v.* 26 above.)

In Job v. 9, ix. 10, xxxiv. 24, the LXX. render the phrase by ἀνεξιχνίαστος;—the word used by St Paul in Rom. xi. 33 ("past finding out"). Cp. Job xxxviii. 16, "in the search (*s. w.*) of the depth" (ἐν ἴχνεσιν ἀβύσσου). Those abysses none but the "Spirit of God" can track out. (1 Cor. ii. 10—16: cp. above on *v.* 13.)

29. He *fainteth not* (*v.* 28); but *giveth power to the faint* (*s. w. a.* "weary" in xxviii. 12, l. 4).

he increaseth strength] Or, "multiplieth." Cp. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.—In the common Hebrew Bibles there is appended to the 2nd Book of Kings (which ends with the account of *Judah's deportation to Babylon*), this doxology:—"Blessed be He that giveth power to the faint, etc."

30. *shall* (or, may) *faint and be weary* (*v.* 28, *s. w.*)] The words are used in Hab. ii. 13 and Jer. li. 58 of the "peoples" of the world toiling "for very vanity." (Cp. [illegible]lvii. 10.)—Even Hezekiah had grown weary, [illegible]mbled grievously.

31. *that wait upon...*] Or, *that wait* **for** (xlix. 23; Lam. iii. 25, *s. w.*).

shall renew their strength] having ever fresh supplies of energy *to take the place of* (so the word implies) what has been expended.

mount up with wings] Or, "on pinion." Others (LXX., Vulg., Bochart); "They shall put forth pinions:" but the former rendering (Targ., Vitr., Gesen., Knob., Del., &c.) is every way preferable. They soar on the wings of faith, above the mists of adversity, into the clear light of God's unchanging love.

mount up...run...walk] The earlier parts of the journey are accomplished under the impulse of ardent feeling; which is succeeded first by robust and energetic effort, and then by steady, but tranquil and almost unconscious, advance. So Deichert ('Stern aus Jacob,' I. 351); who notices that he, who in youth was "caught up into the third heaven," in later life found Christ's strength *made perfect* in his weakness.

CHAP. XLI. Not Israel only, but the Gentile races, should thus "renew their strength" (*v.* 1; *s. w. a.* in xl. 31). He, whose greatness was descanted on in ch. xl, will raise up a conqueror, who shall overthrow Babylon and liberate captive Judah. To shew the distinct prevision, in which this prophecy had its origin, the name of the liberator was afterwards added (xliv. 20, xlv. 1). The heathen are repeatedly challenged to produce any similar evidence of foreknowledge. They cannot do so; and are thereupon required to abandon their idol-gods.

This is the general subject of chh. xli—xlviii. But along with, and underneath this, there is constant reference to a higher work of liberation; which is to be accomplished by a "Servant of the Lord,"—for Israel and for all nations. The fulfilment of that earlier prediction respecting Cyrus is used as a ground on which to rest a demand that men will receive the other larger cycle of prophecy.

KEEP silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew *their* strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.

2 Who raised up † the righteous *man* from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble to his bow.

† Heb. *righteousness.*

3 He pursued them, *and* passed † safely; *even* by the way *that* he had not gone with his feet.

† Heb. *in peace.*

4 Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the [a] first, and with the last; I *am* he.

[a] chap. 43. 10. & 44. 6. & 48. 12. Rev. 1. 17. & 22. 13.

5 The isles saw *it*, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

6 They helped every one his neighbour; and *every one* said to his brother, † Be of good courage.

† Heb. *Be strong.*

7 So the carpenter encouraged the ‖ goldsmith, *and* he that smootheth *with* the hammer ‖ him that smote the anvil, ‖ saying, It *is* ready for the

‖ Or, *founder.* ‖ Or, *the smiting.* ‖ Or, *saying of the soder, It is good.*

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1. The nations are invited to examine the important facts submitted to them.

Keep silence before me] Or, "Listen to me in silence;" ceasing from the noisy projects with which you have "wearied" yourselves (see on xl. 30).

let them come near] and take a close view of the evidence, on which they are to give their verdict.

2. *Who raised up...*] Rather, according to the Masoretic division (which is supported by the parallelism of *v.* 25): *Who raised up* one (*v.* 25) *from the* **sunrising, whom He will call in** *righteousness to His foot;*—to follow Him, and to carry out His righteous mandate against Babylon?

A large number of commentators, both ancient and modern, follow the Targum in making this refer to Abraham. But there are strong reasons for taking it (with Aben-E., Vitr., Stier, Del.) to refer to Cyrus. (1) The word rendered, *raised up*, is used in *v.* 25 and in xlv. 13, which are made by almost all to apply to Cyrus:—in Ezra i. 1, "The Lord *stirred up* the spirit of *Cyrus:*"—in ch. xiii. 17, "I will *stir up the Medes* against (Babel):"—and in Jer. li. 11, "The Lord *hath raised up* the spirit of the kings of *the Medes.*" (2) In xlvi. 11, "*Calling* **a bird of prey** *from the sunrising*" (*s. w.*) is of Cyrus; cp. *v.* 25 below. (3) As here in *v.* 2 we have, "He will *give nations before him* and *subdue kings;*" so in xlv. 1, it is promised that the Lord "will *subdue nations before* him (Cyrus), and loose the loins of *kings:*" and Cyrus himself (in Ezra i. 2) says: "The Lord *hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth.*"

gave the nations...] **He will give** (or, deliver up, Josh. x. 12, *s. w.*) *nations before him, and* **make** *him rule over kings;* **He will give men** *as dust,* &c.

3. *He pursued...*] *He* **shall pursue** *them, he* **shall pass through** *safely.* The next clause runs literally: "By a way (trodden) with his feet shall he not come." This may mean:—"He shall not advance slowly by the ordinary routes, but swiftly on unbeaten tracks;"—even, it may be, along the bed of a river (cp. xlv. 1, 2).

The rapidity of Cyrus's movements and the vast extent of his conquests "admit of no doubt" (Grote, 'H. of G.' III. 244). "The space which he overran covered no less than fifty degrees of longitude, from the coast of Asia Minor to the Oxus and the Indus" (ib. 248).

4. Who was it that *wrought out* this overthrow, preparing for it during many successive *generations*, which *from the beginning* (when they "were not," Rom. iv. 17) He summoned into existence?

I the LORD...] Rather, *I, the* LORD **who am First;** *and* **with the last I am He;** or, "I am the same" (Ps. cii. 27); or simply, "I AM" (LXX. ἐγώ εἰμι). Cp. xliii. 10, 13, xlvi. 4; Deut. xxxii. 39.

This fundamental truth, that God is eternally the same (as He is the only) Self-existent Personal Being, is again and again insisted on in these chapters; see especially xlvi. 9, 10, xlviii. 12; and cp. xlv. 5, 21, 22. To Him the whole range of creaturely existence, in all its cycles, must be visible;—and to Him only can it be so.

5. The career of Cyrus, the conqueror who worships no idol, surprises and alarms the nations. They redouble their superstitious efforts, and hasten to manufacture "a particularly good and strong set" of idols (Sir E. Strachey), to meet so great an emergency. —We have traces in history of such commotions having taken place. The Cumæans consulted the Milesian oracle, "alarmed at the power of the Persians" (Herod. I. 159). And Crœsus sent round to all the principal oracles for their advice.

they *drew near*] to see how this great controversy would be decided.

7. *saying, It is ready...*] Rather, **he saith**

sodering: and he fastened it with nails, *that* it should not be moved.

8 But thou, Israel, *art* my servant, Jacob whom I have [b] chosen, the seed of Abraham my [c] friend.

9 *Thou* whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou *art* my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

10 ¶ Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be [d] ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and [†] they that strive with thee shall perish.

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* [†] them that contended with thee: [†] they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye [‖] men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

15 Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having [†] teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

16 Thou shalt fan them, and the

[b] Deut. 7. 6. & 10. 15. & 14. 2. Psal. 135. 4. chap. 43. 1. & 44. 1.
[c] 2 Chron. 20. 7. James 2. 23.
[d] Exod. 23. 22. chap. 60. 12. Zech. 12. 3.
[†] Heb. *the men of thy strife.*
[†] Heb. *the men of thy contention.*
[†] Heb. *the men of thy war.*
[‖] Or, *few men.*
[†] Heb. *mouths.*

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of the *soldering*, **It is good.** The metallic coating is perfect. All that now remains is to see that this excellent idol be made fast, or it might, perchance, fall.

8. *thou, Israel,* art *my servant*] Rather, *Thou,* **O Israel my servant:**—the whole of *vv.* 8, 9 being a description (in the vocative case) of the person addressed in *v.* 10.

On the title "*My servant*" see Note at the end of the Chapter.

Jacob whom I have chosen] of my own free and spontaneous love:—*s. w. a.* Deut. iv. 37, vii. 6, 7, (Rom. xi. 5).

seed of Abraham my friend (2 Chro. xx. 7)] Lit. **that loved me** (*s. w. a.* Exod. xx. 6). The great promise given to Abraham was given to him *after he had proved his love to God* (flowing from faith in God's love) by wholly resigning Isaac (his "only son, whom he loved") to God's disposal. (Cp. James ii. 23.)

Khalil-ullah, "Friend of God," is a title of Abraham among the Mohammadans ('Qur.' IV. 124); whence Hebron is called *Khalil.*

9. *whom I have taken...*] Lit. "laid hold of:" LXX. ἀντελαβόμην (Luke i. 54, *s. w.*): Vulg. "apprehendi."—Compare Heb. ii. 16, "He *laid hold of* (ἐπελάβετο, as in Jer. xxxi. 32, LXX.) *the seed of Abraham.*"

the chief men thereof] So the Jewish interpreters (as in Exod. xxiv. 11; the only other place where the word occurs). Symm., followed by many moderns, "from the corners thereof."

10. *I am with thee* (xliii. 2)] to fulfil all that was implied in the name, *Immanu-El.*

be not dismayed] Or, look anxiously about for help (*v.* 23, *s. w.*).

I will strengthen...] Lit. **I have strengthened** *thee, yea,* **I have holpen** *thee.* (Similarly in *vv.* 13, 14.)

11. *they shall be...*] Rather, **the men that are at strife with thee** *shall be as nothing,* **and shall perish.**

13. *saying*] **He that saith.**

14. *thou worm Jacob*] Creature of the dust (Job xxv. 6); prostrate and helpless.

thy redeemer, the...] Rather, *the Holy One of Israel is thy Redeemer.* HE will perform the duty that falls to the next of kin (Lev. xxv. 48, 49), and will *redeem* thee from bondage (*s. w. a.* xxxv. 9, xliii. 1, 14, xliv. 6, 22, 23, 24, xlvii. 4, xlviii. 17, 20, xlix. 7, 26, lii. 9, liv. 5).

Obs. To accomplish that work the Redeemer Himself became "as a worm, and no man" (Ps. xxii. 6).

15. *I will make thee a new...*] **I have made** *thee* **as** *a new...* Before, in xxi. 10, xxviii. 28, Israel had been threshed—with the heavy drays of Assyria and Babylon. Now she should become a sharp threshing instrument of a *new* kind, *having teeth,* or, "with two-edged (spikes)." (The word for "two-edged" occurs elsewhere only in Ps. cxlix. 6.) That the *hills* and *mountains* are allegorical is evident (cp. ii. 2). Israel, lately a worm, is now "beating small" (nearly *s. w. a.* Micah iv. 13) empires and kingdoms; so as to separate their good and worthless elements.—With what may this *new* instrument be armed but the "Word

wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, *and* shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

17 *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is* none, *and* their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, *I* the God of Israel will not forsake them.

18 I will open [e] rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the [f] wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, *and* the pine, and the box tree together:

20 That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

21 [†] Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong *reasons*, saith the King of Jacob.

22 Let them bring *them* forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they *be*, that we may [†] consider them, and

[e] chap. 35. 7. & 44. 3.

[f] Psal. 107. 35.

[†] Heb. *Cause to come near.*

[†] Heb. *set our heart upon them.*

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of the Lord" spoken of in xl. 8; which is "sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. iv. 12; cp. Rev. i. 16, xix. 13, 15)?

16. *Thou shalt fan*] Or, **winnow** (xxx. 24), LXX. λικμήσεις (the word used by Theod. in Dan. ii. 44; cp. Matt. xxi. 44). With the second member of the verse, cp. xxix. 19.

17. *When...*] The Hebr. represents it as *a fact*, which moves the divine compassion: *The poor and needy* **are seeking**, &c. The Targ. paraphrases: "The poor and the needy are longing *for teaching*, as the thirsty for water." This was true of Israel (see on iii. 1), as well as of the nations. It is observable that the search after wisdom—philosophy—in Greece, India, and China, seems to date from about the time of Judah's captivity.

faileth] *s.w.a.* xix. 5, Vulg. "aruit."

will not forsake them] Though, indeed, their land be *forsaken* (vi. 12).

18. *in high places*] Or, "bare hill-tops;" — rocky prominences, such as were found "in the wilderness" (see Jer. xii. 12, *s.w.*): the least likely places for finding water.

Obs. Eminently fulfilled in one bare "rocky knoll" (John xix. 17); whereon was planted the tree of life, from the foot of which rivers (better than those of paradise) have flowed forth into the world. (Cp. Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9.)

valleys] The *bik'ah* was a broad flat valley between ridges of hills or rocks. In the desert such a valley would be very hot and dry. Such was the Valley of Dry Bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 1).—The imagery of this verse had been employed in xxx. 25, xxxii. 2, xxxv. 6, 7. It will recur in xliii. 20, xliv. 3, 4, lviii. 11. We may infer from xlviii. 21 that it contains a reference to Israel's early history in the wilderness.

This image of the Stream from the smitten Rock was embodied in rude art by the early Church (De Pressensé, 'Mart. and Ap.' p. 12). There is an indescribable beauty, we are told, in the expression of the Israelites rushing to the fountain; "the first Christians thus setting forth the joy unspeakable of having seen the fountain of divine life opened in a desert a thousand times more waste and arid than the Arabian" (ib.).

19. The wilderness is turned into paradise. —*Shittah* wood was used in the tabernacle (a pledge of paradise) in the desert, Exod. xxv. 5; *cedar*, *fir*, and *oil-tree* wood in the temple, 1 K. vi. 15, 16, 23, 31—33. *Myrtle*-branches and *oil-tree* branches were used at the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. ix. 15). The *pine* and the *box-tree* (or, according to others, the "plane-tree" and the "larch") are mentioned in lx. 13 (the only other place where the words occur) as employed in the sanctuary of glorified Zion. These trees are all fragrant and durable. Cp. lv. 13.

20. *created it*] This new creation began to shew itself on the plain (*bik'ah*) of Dura, Dan. iii. 16—18. The faith of those confessors, who calmly took the side of truth against a consentient world, was supernatural. The Spirit of God alone could have raised up such a martyr Church out of the nation which for nine centuries had been constantly relapsing into idolatry.

Obs. In that victory was an earnest of the Church's triumph over the "golden city" (xiv. 4; cp. 1 John v. 4).

21, 22. The challenge of *vv.* 1—5 restated. Let the heathen gods give proof of superhuman knowledge, either by declaring the true nature of "the former things," so that the issue, or "latter end," may be inferred therefrom; or by at once publishing what events are hereafter to take place.—

know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

23 Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye *are* gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together.

‖ Or, worse than nothing. ‡ Or, worse than of a viper.

24 Behold, ye *are* ‖ of nothing, and your work ‡ of nought: an abomination *is he that* chooseth you.

25 I have raised up *one* from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as *upon* morter, and as the potter treadeth clay.

26 Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, *He is* righteous? yea, *there is* none that sheweth, yea, *there is* none that declareth, yea, *there is* none that heareth your words.

27 The first *shall say* to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

28 For I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counseller, that, when I asked of them, could † answer a word.

† Heb. *return.*

29 Behold, they *are* all vanity; their works *are* nothing: their molten images *are* wind and confusion.

The word for *former* had already been used in ix. 1, H. viii. 23, of an earlier, as contrasted with a *later*, cycle of history. (Cp. i. 26; Lev. xxvi. 45; Ps. lxxxix. 49; Hagg. ii. 3, 9; Ezra iii. 12.) In xlii. 9, xliii. 18, 19, the "former things" are contrasted with "new things," that God would do; which "new things" correspond to the "creation" of *v.* 20 here; cp. lxv. 17, 18. See also xlvi. 9, xlviii. 3. — Schmieder remarks that the "former things" include the *commencements* of history, which to the pagan nations were wrapped up in darkness. Israel knew, from the beginning, that God's purpose of blessing the nations (Gen. xii. 1, 2) stood over against the perverse ambition which built Babel (Gen. xi. 4); and that a total overthrow of their own national constitution would precede the great epoch of blessing (Deut. xxviii. 45, xxx. 5, 6, 9).

22. *for to come*] Or, **that are coming.** These may denote the nearer range of future events (as the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus).

23. *that are to come*] *s. w. a.* xliv. 7, xlv. 11. (Cp. Micah iv. 8.) If they found this test of "foreknowledge" too hard, let them at least shew their power by *doing good* and *doing evil* (Jer. x. 5; cp. ch. xlv. 7).

24. *of nothing*...] Or (marg.), "worse than nothing" (cp. xl. 17). *Worse*, because *deluding* men; sometimes (as in the case of Crœsus) to temporal ruin.—So, in the next clause, "your work is worse than a viper." Cp. lix. 5, 6; "that which is crushed breaketh into *a viper*...(nearly *s. w.*); the act (*s. w.*) of violence is in their hands."

an abomination] Deut. vii. 26. An idol may be a mere nothing; but idol-worship is a positive source of corruption.

25. *and he shall come*] Rather, **and he is come.** The future stands out to His eye in as clear outline as if it had already taken place.

from the north...from the rising of the sun] Cyrus combined in himself two nationalities; his mother being a Mede, his father a Persian. The Median empire lay to the north of Babylonia (Jer. l. 3, 9); Persia to the east.

shall he call upon] Or, "proclaim:" as Cyrus did in his edict, Ezra i. 2 (Del.).

princes] Hebr. *seganim*:—used in Jer. li. 57, Ezek. xxiii. 6, Dan. iii. 2, 27 of Assyrian and Babylonian, in Jer. li. 28 of Median, rulers. According to Spiegel (in Delitzsch) "there is but very little probability in the etymologies which can be suggested for the word *sagan* through the old Persian." Indeed it may be safely inferred from the above passages that the word was Assyrian. When Ahaz paid a visit to Tiglath-Pileser at Damascus (2 K. xvi. 10), he would, of course, become acquainted with such official titles.

morter] *s. w. a.* x. 6, "mire," xxix. 16, "clay."

26. *He is righteous*] This was the acknowledgment drawn from Israel, when they considered how God had forewarned them *from the beginning* of the consequences of disobedience; Dan. ix. 11, 14.

27. *The first shall say*...] Or, "Beforehand is it said unto Zion, Behold, behold them." This was Zion's privilege, to hear the future spoken of in definite and precise language, as if it were present to the eye. So in vii. 14, xiii. 17, xxv. 9, xxviii. 16, xxxii. 1, xl. 10.

28. *For I beheld*] again and again: but *there was no man* (l. 2), worthy of the name; none to answer the challenge.

29. According to the Masoretic division, **Behold them all!** those idolaters (so Del.); **vanity and nothingness are their works;** the gods they have made (xvii. 8).
wind and confusion (Hebr. TOHU)] unsubstantial and fruitless.

NOTE on CHAP. XLI. 8.

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

Israel's national vocation was to be God's servant (Deut. x. 12, 20). So long as they served Him loyally, they had true freedom. When they ceased to do so, He allowed them to fall under the tyranny of heathen nations; "that they may know My service," said God, "and the service of the kingdoms of the countries" (2 Chro. xii. 8). But their *vocation* was not annulled (Rom. xi. 29). The promise to *Abraham's seed* (Gen. xxii. 18) stood firm. The body corporate might suffer dissolution, and the families of Israel be scattered like "dry bones" (Ezek. xxxvii. 2) over the face of the earth: yet there remained an indefectible "holy seed" (vi. 13), —an indestructible germ, in which the continuity of Israel's life was preserved. This "holy seed" was the true *Israel*, the *servant of the Lord*, God's *elect*; possessor of the blessing entailed on Abraham, *the Friend of God*. The title, SERVANT OF THE LORD, is thus applied to "Israel" or "Jacob" here in *vv.* 8, 9, and in xliv. 1, 2, 21″, xlv. 4, xlviii. 20 (but *not* in xlix. 3; see the note).

The other places where the title occurs are xlii. 1, 19″, xliii. 10, xliv. 26, xlix. 3, 5, 6, l. 10, lii. 13, liii. 11. In some of these it is evident that a Person is addressed, who, while He is so closely related to Israel that He can be its representative, has at the same time a transcendent personality, which enables Him to stand outside Israel and to act independently of it or even in antagonism to it. Thus in xlix. 5, 6, He is sharply distinguished from Israel; and in ch. liii He is rejected by Israel, whose iniquities He bears vicariously. It is impossible to sever this "Servant of the Lord," in whom "His soul delighteth," on whom His Spirit abides (xlii. 1), who "shall set judgment in the earth," and *for whose law the isles shall wait* (xlii. 4), from the Divine Person spoken of in ch. xi. Indeed (see above, p. 13) the language of lii. 13 appears to identify Him with "the King, the Lord of Hosts."—In xlii. 19″, xliii. 10, xliv. 26, there may be room for doubt as to who it is that is spoken of.

Obs. It is a circumstance much to be noted that the title, SERVANT OF THE LORD, occurring nineteen times in chh. xli—liii, *disappears after* liii. 11; "My Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." The reason is obvious. His work as Servant is thenceforth finished (Heb. x. 12). The "Everlasting Covenant" has been established (lv. 3).

On the other hand; in the chapter following liii we have a new term, SERVANTS OF THE LORD. This expression, which does not occur at all before liv, occurs ten times in liv—lxvi (liv. 17, lvi. 6, lxiii. 17, lxv. 9, 13‴, 14, 15, lxvi. 14). The relation between these two complementary series of facts is fully explained by liii. 10, "He shall see His seed," and liii. 11, "He shall see of the travail of His soul." Through the obedience of the one Righteous Servant many had been made righteous (Rom. v. 15—19).

CHAPTER XLII.

1 *The office of Christ, graced with meekness and constancy.* 5 *God's promise unto him.* 10 *An exhortation to praise God for his gospel.* 17 *He reproveth the people of incredulity.*

BEHOLD [a]my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul [b]delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

[a] Matth. 12. 18.

[b] Matth. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6.

CHAP. XLII. In contrast with that scene of desolation (xli. 29) One is introduced, whose work shall restore moral order among the nations. In Him both Israel and Cyrus will find an antitype. He will be truly what Israel was by vocation, "the Servant of the Lord," establishing judgment on the earth. He will be to mankind at large, in regard to their spiritual condition, what Cyrus was politically to the captive Jews,—their liberator from darkness.

1. *my servant*] The Targ. adds, "Messiah." Even Abarbanel (quoted by Hendn.) says, that they who do not interpret this of Messiah are smitten with blindness. LXX. ὁ παῖς μου (Matt. xii. 18).

mine elect] The word is used of Moses, Ps. cvi. 23, and of Saul, 2 S. xxi. 6. He is the effective Mediator; the abiding King. Through Him, moreover, a new Israel shall be formed that may bear the title "Elect" (xliii. 20, xlv. 4). See also lxv. 9, 15, 22; and cp. Eph. i. 4.

delighteth] Frequently used of God's *acceptance* of sacrifices (Ps. li. 18, H. 19). It supplies the antithesis of i. 14. (Luke iii. 22.)

my spirit upon him] xi. 2, lxi. 1.

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the [1] smoking flax shall he not [†] quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

4 He shall not fail nor be [†] discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

5 ¶ Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for [c] a light of the Gentiles;

7 To open the blind eyes, to [d] bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in [e] darkness out of the prison house.

8 I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my [f] glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

10 Sing unto the LORD a new

[1] Or, *dimly burning.*
[†] Heb. *quench it.*
[†] Heb. *broken.*
[c] chap. 49. 6. Luke 2. 32. Acts 13. 47.
[d] chap. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. Hebr. 2. 14, 15.
[e] chap. 9. 2.
[f] chap. 48. 11.

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bring forth...] Or, **cause *judgment* to go forth** (*v.* 3, *s. w.*). His righteous government, which had hitherto been displayed chiefly inside Israel, shall now *go forth* to the long-oppressed nations (cp. ii. 3; Hab. i. 4).

2. Yet that mighty work shall be carried on unobtrusively. *He shall not cry*, as in helpless grief (xxxiii. 7), *nor lift up* a shout as in triumph (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 11), or, in altercation (lviii. 4): nor publish His doings *in the street* ostentatiously (Matt. vi. 5, xii. 16).

3. *A bruised reed*] Used in xxxvi. 6 of a nation whose power was seriously impaired. He would deal tenderly with the bruised and oppressed (lviii. 6, *s. w.*) in Israel; with the lowly and contrite of mankind.

smoking] Or (marg.), **dimly burning.** If the flax (xliii. 17) which formed the head of a torch, or the wick of a lamp, gave only a feeble light, He would not extinguish it; but would trim it and supply it with fresh oil. (Cp. lxi. 3.)

Since the word for *reed* is used of the "branches" of the candelabrum of the tabernacle in Exod. xxv. 31—35, the *reed* and *flax* may be parts of the same figure.—The tottering, flickering, "lamp of David" (1 K. xi. 36, 2 K. viii. 19) should yet grow strong and bright; cp. Ps. cxxxii. 17.

bring forth judgment unto truth] **cause it to go forth** (*v.* 1) **in** *truth*,—or, "according to (xxxii. 1) truth:" this *truth* being the victorious display of God's faithfulness (Micah vii. 20).

4. *He shall not fail...*] Lit. (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 3): *He shall not* **burn dimly** *nor* **be bruised**:—as if He Himself were the lamp. Feeble as His light appeared in the days of His *servitude*, it would illumine the world (li. 4):—He would *set* (or, establish) *judgment in the earth* (Jer. xxiii. 5). *The isles* (especially the coasts of the Mediterranean) should *wait for* and long for (*s. w. a.* li. 5, "trust": cp. on Job xiii. 15) the full declaration of *His law* and teaching (cp. ii. 3, lx. 9).

6. *in righteousness*] (xlv. 13), in the pursuance of My righteous plan.

a covenant of the people] The expression occurs again in xlix. 8; where the context (*vv.* 5—7) implies that they, who are constituted a "people" by this new covenant, are in a large measure Gentiles. (Cp. Ps. xxii. 31, cii. 18; ch. xliii. 21.)—It is evident that neither Israel at large, nor any section of it, nor yet Cyrus, could be spoken of as being "the covenant,"—the ground of the people's abiding in communion with God. To seal such a covenant a mightier "Servant of the Lord" was needed (Luke xxii. 20; Heb. xiii. 17).

7. *them that sit in darkness* (cp. ix. 1) *out of the prison-house*, or, **dungeon** (Jer. xxxvii. 15, 18, *s. w.*). Cp. xxix. 18.

8. *I am the* LORD] Whose name JEHOVAH was manifested, when He executed "judgment on all the gods of Egypt" (Exod. xii. 12).

9. The *new things* here, as in xliii. 18, 19, are such as require an exercise of that creative power, which was so much dwelt on in *v.* 5. The "former things," contrasted with them, must be the earlier cycle of Israel's, and of the world's, history. (See on xli. 20; and cp. 2 Cor. v. 17.)

before they spring forth] *s. w. a.* Gen. ii. 5. As the law of the vegetable's life is contained in the germ, so is the whole order of events in the moral world pre-existent in the Divine Idea (Cp. xliii. 19, xlv. 8, *s. w.*)

10. *song...end of the earth...sea...isles*]

song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and [†] all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

[†] Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their voice*, the villages *that* Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

12 Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.

13 The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall [‡] prevail against his enemies.

[‡] Or, *behave himself mightily.*

14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, *and* refrained myself: *now* will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and [†] devour at once.

[†] Heb. *swallow, or, sup up.*

15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

16 And I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things [†] straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

[†] Heb. *into straightness.*

17 ¶ They shall be [ε] turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye *are* our gods.

[ε] Psal. 97. 7; chap. 1. 29. & 44. 11. & 45. 16.

18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

19 Who *is* blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger *that* I sent? who *is* blind as *he that is* perfect, and blind as the LORD's servant?

20 Seeing many things, [ζ] but thou

[ζ] Rom. 2. 21.

Cp. xxiv. 15, 16. For the expression "new song," see note on Ps. xcvi. 1: and cp. the Excursus at p. 506 (Vol. IV.).

11. *of the rock*] "of Sela;" that is, Petra, xvi. 1. Now even Idumea may rejoice.

13. *a man of war*] Cp. Exod. xv. 3; Ps. xxiv. 8. He *shall stir up* (see on xiii. 17) His slumbering *jealousy* (on ix. 7).

14. *I have long time...*] Or, *I have holden My peace* (lxiv. 12) **from of old** (lvii. 11, *s. w.*): cp. Ps. l. 21. In order that God's work of blessing the nations (that "mystery kept secret since the world began," Rom. xvi. 25) might be carried out, He must no longer shew forbearance to His enemies (inside Israel or without, carnal or spiritual).

I have been still...] Or, **I kept silence; I restrained** *myself.* (Cp. on lxiii. 15.)

like a travailing woman] whose long period of silent endurance is ended by sudden throes;—soon to be followed by joy (John xvi. 21).

I will destroy...] Or, *I will* **desolate** *and* **swallow up at once.**—So the ancient versions; so too Gesen., referring to Ezek. xxxvi. 3 (*s. w.*); and this harmonizes best with *v.* 15. Many moderns: "I will breathe forth and draw in My breath together;"—as one who is making a severe effort.

15, 16. The end of *v.* 16, "*these things* **have I done** *unto them, and* **have not forsaken them,**" takes us back to the promise in xli. 17. When God laid waste the green hills of His land, and led His blind people along strange, dark, and crooked paths, He might seem to have abandoned them. But the purpose of all that wandering in the desert of tribulation was, to bring them into the land of abiding "light."

17. *shall be turned*] **are** *turned*:—driven back in confusion from the way they had marked out for themselves (*s. w. a.* Jer. xxxviii. 22, xlvi. 5).

18—25. The deaf and blind people are invited to consider two great facts: (1) the voluntary humiliation of God's perfect Servant through whom God's law is to be magnified, *vv.* 19—21; (2) their own national suffering and its causes, *vv.* 21—25.

19. *my messenger that I sent*] Rather, *whom I* **will send**;—evidently the same with Him, who in xlviii. 16 says, "And now the Lord God hath sent Me;"—the "Messenger of the Covenant" (Mal. iii. 1). He became as one that was "blind," as if he stumbled into the trap His enemies laid for Him:—"like a deaf man, who heard not" (Ps. xxxviii. 13), as if he were insensible of the insults and blasphemies uttered against Him by His own people.

he that is perfect] Or, "the meritorious One;" lit. "He that is to be rewarded" (see Prov. xi. 31, xiii. 13; *the only places* where the Pual of the verb is used of a person). He, the all-meritorious, submitted to bear the recompense that was due to the "sins of the world."

observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify
‖Or, him. the law, and make ‖ *it* honourable.

22 But this *is* a people robbed and spoiled; ‖ *they are* all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for †a spoil, and none saith, Restore.

‖Or, *in snaring all the young men of them.* †Heb. *a treading.*

23 Who among you will give ear to this? *who* will hearken and hear
†Heb. *for the after time?* †for the time to come?

24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.

25 Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid *it* not to heart.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1 *The Lord comforteth the church with his promises.* ℭ 8 *He appealeth to the people for witness of his omnipotency.* 14 *He foretelleth them the destruction of Babylon,* 18 *and his wonderful deliverance of his people.* 22 *He reproveth the people as inexcusable.*

BUT now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine.

2 When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

3 For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I

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20. *Seeing...*] **Thou hast seen** *many things, but,* **markest** *not:*—many grievous deeds, which, if He had not refused to "mark" them (Ps. cxxx. 3; Job xiv. 16 *s.w.*), might have called down destruction upon the doers.

opening the ears] Really aware of those bitter speeches; though as one who heard not.

21. *The* LORD **was** *well pleased*] He *acquiesced* in this abasement of the meritorious One, *for His righteousness' sake*, that He might exhibit His unswerving righteousness, and yet justify the penitent sinner. On that account "*the Lord was pleased* (*s. w.*) to bruise Him" (liii. 10).

make it honourable] Or, "glorious:" so that its supremacy should be "established" (Rom. iii. 31), and its majesty be vindicated throughout the universe.

22. While the Servant of the Lord is thus patiently seeking their salvation, Israel continues stubborn, and must be given up to punishment.

robbed and spoiled] **spoiled and robbed;** *s. w. a.* in xvii. 14. Cp. xviii. 2.

snared in holes] Taken in their enemies' snares, and confined in subterranean dungeons.—So A. Ezra, Knob., Del.

24. *did not the* LORD] whose instrument the Chaldean was (x. 15).

against whom we have sinned] As in liii, lix, lxiii, lxiv, the prophet identifies himself with the sinful people.

they would not] Cp. xxviii. 12.

25. *it burned him*] *s. w. a.* xliii. 2 ("kindle upon"):—a striking instance of the double aspect in which Israel is presented in these chapters. The corrupt nation is subjected to the fire of judgment: but the "Israel of God" suffers no hurt.

CHAP. XLIII. 1. "*I have called thee by thy name*] (xlv. 3), giving thee a definite call to a specific work. (Cp. Exod. xxxi. 2, xxxiii. 12.) Hence in xlviii. 12 Israel is styled, "My called."

2. *waters...fire*] Ps. lxvi. 12.—The empires of the world were as mighty rivers (viii. 7); their persecuting hatred as fire.—On one remarkable occasion the latter part of this promise was *literally* fulfilled (Dan. iii. 17, 27).

3. *thy Saviour*] As had been lately proved in historical fact, xxxvii. 35.

I gave] Or, "I have given." Egypt, Cush, and Seba (Meröe, cp. on Ps. lxxii. 10), were not parts of the Babylonian empire: but they should be added to the Persian empire, as the reward of Israel's emancipation. They were actually annexed by Cambyses, the son of Cyrus (cp. Esth. i. 1).

give men for thee, and people for thy ‖ life.

‖ Or, *person.*

5 [a] Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

[a] chap. 44. 2. Jer. 30. 10. & 46. 27.

6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

7 *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 ¶ Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: [b] who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, *It is* truth.

[b] chap. 41. 21.

10 Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: [c] before me there was ‖ no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

[c] chap. 41. 4. & 44. 8. ‖ Or, *nothing formed of God.*

11 I, *even* I, [d] *am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour.

[d] chap. 45. 21. Hos. 13. 4.

12 I have declared, and have saved,

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4. *Since*] That is, "From the time that." Israel became "precious," when the promise of a blessing for all nations was attached to him.

will I give men (Hebr. *adam*) *for thee*] as the price of thy recovery. Egypt, Babylon, **peoples**,—all merely temporal interests,—should give way before the advance of God's Kingdom. Cp. liv. 17, lx. 12.

5—7. This promise, which had an initial fulfilment in the return from Babylon (cp. Ps. cvii. 3), and a larger one in the gathering in of Gentile converts (cp. Matt. viii. 11), looks on yet further to the final recovery of Israel.

8. Israel shall be witnesses to the world of the divine prescience.

Bring forth, into the great court of assize, *the blind people that have eyes*, the Jews (lix. 10; cp. Deut. xxviii. 28, 29). They stand with their Law and Prophets in their hands, reading them, and authenticating them, yet not perceiving their true purport. This their blindness was foretold, and its penal character proclaimed, in the very books which they have prized above life itself.

9. *Let all...*] Or, "All ye nations, gather you together, and let the **peoples** assemble." Can any of them *declare this*,—the great coming event, Israel's deliverance? **or let them** *shew us former things*,—exhibiting the past history of the world, in well-attested documents. If they have not such, then let them hear the sacred records, and confess them to be the *truth*.

10. The heathen gods have no such witnesses. But God has. Israel was ready to bear incontrovertible testimony both to the "earlier" and the "later" books of Scripture;—the historical books, some of them written seven centuries before the date of this chapter; and these prophecies, which were delivered seven centuries before the birth of Christ. In virtue of the historical books, the Jews are witnesses to the doctrine of pure Theism. This indeed (it has been observed) was the very life of the people,—was what made them a people; and they maintained that it was revealed to them by God. "*They* begin with the beginning of history; and this august doctrine begins with them. They are *its witnesses and confessors*, even to torture and death." (Dr Newman, 'Gr. of As.' pp. 427, 428.) In virtue of the prophetical books they are the great witnesses to the Gospel. "Nothing could be more unlikely than the events which have befallen the Jewish nation. *Nothing like them has ever been foretold of any other nation*, or has ever happened to any other...The Jews, therefore, are a kind of standing miracle; being a monument of the wonderful fulfilment of the most extraordinary prophecies ever delivered, which prophecies they themselves preserve and *bear witness to*, though *they shut their eyes to the fulfilment of them*." (Abp Whately, 'Evid.' pp. 89, 90.) Cp. Dr Pusey's 'Univ. Serm.' pp. 63, 229, 230.

and my servant] who is here distinguished from the nation as in xlix. 6. Targ. "My Servant, the Messiah." He was to be eminently *a witness to the peoples* (lv. 4; cp. Rev. i. 5).

11. *beside me...*] A merely human Messiah, therefore, could not work out salvation. (Matt. i. 21—23.)

12. *I have declared...*] Or, **I myself** *declared* (beforehand), *and saved* (in accordance with that declaration), *and* **published** (the account of that deliverance). All this had been verified recently in the Assyrian cycle of Isaiah's prophecies.—*I myself* have done this; *and there was no strange* (god, Deut. xxxii. 16; Jer. iii. 13),—

and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God.

13 Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall †[e] let it?

† Heb. *turn it back?*

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their †nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry *is* in the ships.

[e] Job 9. 12. chap. 14. 27.

† Heb. *bars.*

15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King.

16 Thus saith the LORD, which [f] maketh a way in the sea, and a [g] path in the mighty waters;

[f] Exod. 14. 16, 22. [g] Josh. 3. 13, 16.

17 Which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

18 ¶ Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

19 Behold, I will do a [h] new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.

[h] 2 Cor. 5. 17. Rev. 21. 5.

20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the †‡owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

‡ Or, *ostriches.* † Heb. *daughters of the owl.*

21 [i] This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

[i] Luke 1. 74, 75.

22 ¶ But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; *but* thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.

23 Thou hast not brought me the

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among you] That great deliverance under Hezekiah formed a crucial test;—for it occurred after Judah had publicly renounced those alien gods.

that I...] Lit. **and** *I am God:*—your own testimony proves it.

13. *before the day* was] Lit. "from the day;" which may be either, since time began (so LXX., Targ., Vulg.), or (cp. Ezek. xlviii. 35), "from to-day" (Ew., Knob., Del.).

who shall let it?] Or, **reverse** *it* (see on xiv. 27).—Balaam, the blind prophet, who had his eyes opened to see Israel's future greatness, was unable to "reverse" God's work. So should it be with "the blind people that had eyes." Against their intent they would *bless* the Church of God.

14. *I have sent* (My sanctified ones, xiii. 3) *to Babylon; and* **I will bring down all of them as fugitives;** *and the Chaldeans* (the proudest of all) **in their joyous ships**: once filled with shouts of mirth, now sought as a means of flight.

15. *your King*] since the Exodus (Exod. xv. 18); to which event *vv.* 16, 17 clearly allude. (See Exod. xiv. 4, 9, 16, 22.)

17. *the army and the power*] Or, *the* **valiant** *and the* **strong.**

they shall not rise] xxvi. 14 (*s. w.*).

19. *a new thing*] A Greater Redemption than the old one;—a New Covenant (Jer. xxxi. 32, 33), springing out of that "new thing in the earth" (ib. *v.* 22), the Incarnation.

20. This "new thing" would bring with it a removal of the curse which had turned Israel into a desert (cp. xxxiii. 9, xxxv. 1, 6); which had made "Edom" the haunt of **jackals and ostriches.** (The words in xxxiv. 13 are the same as here.)

waters...rivers] The allegory is expounded in xliv. 3. Virtually it is so here by *v.* 21; which ought to be separated from *v.* 20 by a semicolon only.

21. *This people have I...*] Rather, **The people which** (Exod. xv. 13, 16) *I formed.*

my praise] LXX. *τὰς ἀρετάς μου* (as in 1 Pet. ii. 9). Cp. on lx. 6.

22. Hitherto Israel had not answered the Creator's design.

hast not...me] The pronoun is emphatic. "Yet on Me (who have shewn thee so much love) hast thou not called." The opposition is (as in Ps. l. 8, 15; cp. on *v.* 23), between asking help from God as their loving Benefactor, and thinking to propitiate by outward rites an austere Master.

thou hast been weary of me] Or, **toiled** (*vv.* 23, 24) **in regard of Me.** Instead of calling to thy help an ever-gracious Redeemer, thou hast looked on His service as an irksome burden, imposed by an exacting despot, who seeks of thee some huge gift for his own gratification. (Cp. Micah vi. 3.)

23, 24. *Thou hast not brought me...*] Rather, *Thou* **broughtest not for Me the lamb** (liii. 7, *s. w.*) *of thy burnt offerings.* Thy daily morning and evening sacrifice

† Heb. *lambs*, or, *kids*.

† small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou † filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

† Heb. *made me drunk*, or, *abundantly moistened*.

25 I, *even* I, *am* he that [k] blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

[k] Ezek. 36. 22, &c.

26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

27 Thy first father hath sinned, and thy † teachers have transgressed against me.

† Heb. *interpreters*.

28 Therefore I have profaned the ‖ princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

‖ Or, *holy princes*.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1 *God comforteth the church with his promises.* 7 *The vanity of idols,* 9 *and folly of idol makers.* 21 *He exhorteth to praise God for his redemption and omnipotency.*

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was no advantage to Me; it was wholly for thy own good,—that thou mightest have free access to My covenanted mercies. Similarly; *With thy sacrifices* **thou didst not glorify Me** (*v.* 20): it added nought to My honour that thou wast allowed to present, and partake of, the peace-offerings;—though great was the honour thereby granted to thee, of being admitted to fellowship with the Most High. **I caused thee no labour** (laid no *servile* task on thee, *s. w. a.* in *v.* 24) **in meal-offering**; which was an easy oblation, condescendingly accepted by God as "a sweet odour;"—**neither made thee to toil in respect of incense**; the offering being (like the tabernacle arrangements generally) on a small scale; as if to minimize the danger of the outward rite's being held to be meritorious. *Thou boughtest* **not** *sweet cane* (Exod. xxx. 23) *with money* **for Me**; the holy oil was for *thy* benefit, that through the ministry of the consecrated priest thou mightest have an atonement made for sin:—*and with the fat of thy sacrifices thou* **didst not refresh Me**;—if it were graciously taken by God as His share, it was in order that His people might have a symbolical pledge of their communion with Him.

But this was not the whole of the case. *He* had not made them to toil for His good; but *they* had reduced Him to the necessity of servitude. **Verily,** *thou* **hast caused Me to labour** (as a servant) *by thy sins; thou hast* **made Me to toil by** *thine iniquities.*—The next verse informs us of the nature of the work here spoken of: it was for the blotting out of Israel's sins.—So that here we have an explanation of the mystery respecting the "Servant of the Lord." He who "bore our iniquities" (liii. 11) was none other than Jehovah Himself.

Obs. In *v.* 23 the LXX. has οὐκ ἐδούλωσά σε: the Vulg. "non te servire feci." In *v.* 24 the Vulg. has "servire me fecisti...præbuisti mihi laborem."—Compare the well-known "*Tantus labor* non sit cassus."

25. *that blotteth out* (xliv. 22)] as one might erase a record of guilt (Ps. li. 1, 9, H. 3, 11; *s. w.*). LXX. ἐξαλείφων (Col. ii. 14).

for mine own sake] xxxvii. 35, xlviii. 1. He undertook that work of expiation from no other motive than spontaneous love.

26. If this be not true, let them come forward and present their own statement of the account betwixt God and them.—*Put me in remembrance* of thy good deeds; producing the book, in which thy services are recorded (cp. Esther vi. 1, 2). *Declare thou;* make thy own recital; *that thou mayest be justified;*—thou, and not God (*s. w. a.* Ps. li. 4).

Obs. Ps. li stands in the same relation to Ps. l, that *v.* 25 stands in to *vv.* 22—24.

27. *Thy first father* **sinned**] This has been referred to Adam (Kimchi, J. H. Mich., Knob.), to Jacob (Ew., Seinecke), to Aaron (Birks), &c.: to Abraham (Jerome, Rashi, Stier, Del.), who is styled "your father" in li. 2. (Cp. lxiii. 16; Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 39.) Even Abraham had no claim on the ground of merit (Rom. iv. 1—5).—The connexion with *v.* 28 favours the reference to *Jacob* ("*thy father*," lviii. 14.)

and thy teachers] Or (marg.), **interpreters** (Job xxxiii. 23; cp. 2 Chro. xxxii. 31, *s. w.*); they who were appointed to stand between God and Israel; to expound His will, or to present their requests:—as Moses and Aaron (Ps. xcix. 8); David and Solomon and Hezekiah; the great body of the priests and prophets (Jer. xxxii. 32). All had *transgressed* (*s. w. a.* i. 2).

28. *I have profaned*] and deprived of their sacred dignity (Ps. lxxxix. 39)

the princes of the sanctuary] The chief priests (1 Chro. xxiv. 5).

have given...] Or, **I will give** *Jacob to*

[a] chap. 41. 8. & 43. 1. Jer. 30. 10. & 46. 27.

YET now hear, [a] O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen:

2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

[b] chap. 35. 7. Joel 2. 28. John 7. 38. Acts 2. 18.

3 For I will [b] pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

4 And they shall spring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

5 One shall say, I *am* the LORD'S; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto the LORD, and surname *himself* by the name of Israel.

6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; [c] I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God.

[c] chap. 41. 4. & 48. 12. Rev. 1. 8, 17. & 22. 13.

7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it?* ye *are* even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, [d] *there is* no † God; I know not *any*.

[d] Deut. 4. 35, 39. & 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 2. chap. 45. 5.

† Heb. *rock.*

9 ¶ They that make a graven image *are* all of them vanity; and their † delectable things shall not profit; and they *are* their own witnesses; [e] they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

† Heb. *desirable.*

[e] Psal. 115. 4, &c.

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a curse (Hebr. *chérem*, xxxiv. 5), placing it under anathema (1 Cor. xvi. 22; Gal. i. 8, 9); *and Israel to* **revilings** (li. 7, *s. w.*; cp. Ezek. v. 15).

CHAP. XLIV. Out of this national ruin a new Jeshurun (*v.* 2) shall be formed.

1. *Yet now*] (xliii. 1). Or, **And now**:—seeing that matters have come to such a pass.

2. *from the womb*] (*v.* 24). From the time when "a nation was born at once, in a day" (cp. lxvi. 8), at the Red Sea deliverance. From that day onward a spiritual work had been going on inside the chosen people.—For the name *Yeshurun*, see note on Deut. xxxii. 15. The LXX. here, ὁ ἠγαπημένος Ἰσραήλ: Aq., S., Th. εὐθύς.

3. *I will pour*] Cp. xxxii. 15.

4. *among the grass*] The "grass" in xl. 6—8 represented frail mankind. In the midst of the perishable race the new Israel should flourish in abiding strength. Cp. lxv. 22.

5. This Jeshurun would consist of men who gave themselves, by an act of personal self-dedication, to be God's people.—*One... another...another;* lit. "this...this...this," as in Ps. lxxxvii. 4, 5.

call himself *by the name*] Or, "proclaim the name;" as that in which he gloried.

subscribe...] Or, "*shall* **write** *with his hand*, THE LORD'S;"—enrolling himself as one who belongs to the Lord. So Vulg. "scribet manu suâ: Domino."

6. *the King of Israel*] Cp. xliii. 15. It was the title used by Nathanael (the "Israelite indeed"), *after* he had confessed Jesus to be "the Son of God;" as though it implied a yet stronger affirmation regarding Him. No stronger terms could be found than are used here: *the* LORD, *the* LORD *of Hosts, the First and the Last, beside* whom *there is no God.* (Cp. Matt. xxvii. 40, 42.)

7. *shall call*] summoning the future event into being, xli. 4:—*and set it in order for Me*, arranging the details of it so as to suit My designs. God had done this in regard to Israel ever since He constituted it a nation.

the ancient people] whom He had "carried all the days *of old;*" lxiii. 9 (*s. w.*).—According to Kimchi (Vitr., Knob., &c.), the *things that are coming* are the nearer class of future events; the things *which shall come*, the more remote. Delitzsch supposes just the reverse. But the distinction appears to lie rather in the *strength* of the respective terms: (1) things which are *on their way;* and (2) which *shall actually arrive.* Cp. the use of the latter verb in xlii. 9, xlvii. 13, xlviii. 3, 5; Deut. xviii. 22, xxx. 1.

8. *from that time*] So A. V. rightly; as in xlv. 21, xlviii. 8;—from the date of My word's going forth. In xlviii. 3, 7, it is rendered "from the beginning."

yea, there is no God] Rather, **and** *there is* **no Rock** (xvii. 10, xxvi. 4).

9. *their delectable things*] The idols they had so cherished and fondled (cp. i. 29, *s. w.*).

10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image *that* is profitable for nothing?

11 Behold, all his fellows shall be [f] ashamed: and the workmen, they *are* of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; *yet* they shall fear, *and* they shall be ashamed together.

12 [g] The smith [l] with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he [l] strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*.

15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth *it*; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

16 He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire:

17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god, *even* his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou *art* my god.

18 They have not known nor understood: for he hath [t] shut their eyes, that they cannot see; *and* their hearts, that they cannot understand.

f Psal. 97. 7. chap. 1. 29. & 42. 17. & 45. 16.

g Jer. 10. 3. Wisd. 13. 11.

l Or, *with an axe.*

l Or, *taketh courage.*

t Heb. *daubed.*

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their own witnesses] They need no witnesses to character,—those sightless, senseless idols.

10, 11. *that is profitable for nothing*] Lit. "so as not to profit." *Who* is there (can there be any?) so intent on making sure of disappointment for himself and *all his fellows*,—all who take part in the enterprise?

11. *the workmen, they are of men*] Or, *the* **artificers themselves** *are of men.* With all their skill, they are but *human.*

be gathered together] to see if their unanimity in error will be of any service.

12. The whole process of image-making is now reviewed. First comes the making of the adze, or graving tool. **The iron-smith** (maketh) **an adze** (Jer. x. 3); *and worketh it in the coal...with* **his arm of strength**;—the said strength depending on his having a due supply of meat and drink.

13. Then the carpenter uses his *rule* and *line* (or, "pencil"); **worketh it with chisels**, &c.; and at last produces something that resembles *the beauty of* **man** (H. *adam*), **to dwell in the house**,—the chief guardian of the family!

14. But the carpenter can only shape his materials, not create them. Whence did they come? **He must cut down** *cedars,...* **and he** *encourageth himself in the trees of the forest;* as if they, planted in the ground and nourished by the rain, could be more closely allied to deity than man is. From first to last the thing has done nothing for itself.

15. The pedigree of the image is now complete. It is of the family from which man gets his fuel. Yet he makes an idol of it, *and falleth down thereto.* This last verb, which occurs only in Isai. xliv. 15, 17, 19, xlvi. 6; and Dan. iii. 5, ff., seems to denote the ceremony of bowing down so as to touch the ground with the forehead.—Doubtless Ahaz, who was so attentive to the shape of the Damascus altar (2 K. xvi. 10, 11), would be observant of modes of prostration.

16, 17. One main *part thereof* is used for warmth, another for cooking (*v.* 19): *the residue thereof*—a mere fraction—*he maketh* **to be a god, to be his** *graven image.*

18. The condition here described resembles that of Israel in i. 3, vi. 10, and xlii. 25. No doubt these earnest and prolonged exposures of the futility of idol-worship were meant chiefly for them.

he hath shut...] Or, "One hath plastered their eyes, that they see not, and their hearts, that they discern not." (Cp. 2 Cor. iv. 4.)

† Heb. *setteth to his heart.*

19 And none †considereth in his heart, neither *is there* knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten *it:* and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to

† Heb. *that which comes of a tree?*

†the stock of a tree?

20 He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?

21 ¶ Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou *art* my servant: I have formed thee; thou *art* my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

23 Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done *it:* shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

24 Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I *am* the LORD that maketh all *things;* that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

25 That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

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19. *And none considereth...*] *s. w. a.* Deut. iv. 39, xxx. 1. As this expression implies a *returning to right thoughts*, the versions seem justified in rendering the two last clauses interrogatively.

20. *He feedeth on ashes*] which have no nutritive power. (See Dr Macmillan, 'Min. of N.' p. 142.) Cp. Hos. xii. 2; Prov. xv. 14.

a deceived heart] carried away by illusions (cp. on xxx. 10); which are ever disappointing him, and yet retain their power.

Is there not a lie...] Is not that which I am clinging to an unreality?—Jer. x. 14, xvi. 19; (Rom. i. 25),

21. *O Jacob and Israel*] should be pointed, "O Jacob; and Israel, for..."

thou shalt not be forgotten of me] So A. Ezra, Kimchi, Vitr., Ew., Gesen., Knob., Del. Most ancient versions have, "thou shalt not forget Me:" but the other rendering harmonizes better with the next verse. Penitent Israel needed to be assured that, in spite of the dark cloud of sin which for the time hid from them the "light of God's countenance" (lix. 2), they were not consigned to oblivion. (Cp. xl. 27, xlix. 14.)

22. *blotted out*] Or, "swept away" (*s. w. a.* xliii. 25).

a thick cloud...a cloud] Rather, **a cloud... a dark cloud.**

return] That is all He asks for: Deut. xxx. 2, 8; Hos. xiv. 1.

23. *Sing, O ye heavens*] (xlix. 13), for they too rejoice over the returning and pardoned sinner (Luke xv. 10). A comparison of xlix. 13 seems to shew that *the lower parts of the earth* are contrasted with the "heavens," —not with the "mountains," which follows; —the earth at large being viewed as a region of darkness (which is the idea associated with the expression "lower parts of the earth;" see Ps. lxiii. 9, cxxxix. 15).

the LORD hath done it] Or, "done (all):" cp. *v.* 24. So in Ps. xxii. 31.

break forth...] See on xiv. 7. The trees of the forest would no longer be misused (*v.* 14) to dishonour God and degrade man. On the contrary, the restoration of man would bring an accession of dignity to the whole outward creation.

glorified] **will glorify.**

24. *that maketh all things*] Or, "that doeth all;" executing whatever He designs.

stretcheth...spreadeth] A. Ezra calls attention to the use here of the present tense; as implying that it is God who continually upholds heaven and earth in existence.

by myself] So the Keri; literally "from with Myself,"—so that it originated with Me, xxviii. 29. The Kethiv reads: "who was with Me?" LXX. τίς ἕτερος. Vulg. "nullus mecum."

25. *of the liars*] Or, "of lies" (xvi. 6); —of the lying systems of divination.

maketh...mad] Suffering them to be demented by their own art (*s. w. a.* Job xii. 17).

turneth.....backward] in hopeless defeat (Lam. i. 13). For *maketh...foolish*, the LXX. has μωραίνων: cp. 1 Cor. i. 20.

26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the † decayed places thereof:

† Heb. *wastes.*

27 That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, *k* Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

k 2 Chron. 36. 22. Ezra 1. 1. chap. 45. 13.

CHAPTER XLV.

1 *God calleth Cyrus for his church's sake.* 5 *By his omnipotency he challengeth obedience.* 20 *He convinceth the idols of vanity by his saving power.*

THUS saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I ‖ have holden, to subdue na-

‖ Or, *strengthened.*

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26. *That confirmeth*] Or, "establisheth (cp. Jer. xxix. 10)," *the word of His servant*, —here, perhaps, Isaiah himself (cp. xx. 3); the "messengers" being the prophets generally.

that saith to...] Or, of (and so in *vv.* 27, 28):—**She shall...They shall.**

27. *will dry up...*] Or, *will* **make** *thy rivers* **dry land.** The "deep" appears to denote the Euphrates (cp. Jer. li. 36); the "rivers" being its various streams. The empire typified by Euphrates should be dried up (Jer. l. 38).

28. *of Cyrus*] Hebr. *Koresh;* which meant in ancient Persian, THE SUN. This is expressly stated by Ktesias (quoted in Gesen. 'Thes.'); who having resided some time in Persia is an unimpeachable witness. It is supported by the *Khur* and *Hur* of later Persian. "Abulfeda explains *Khur-shid* by 'the splendour of the Sun'" (Hendn.).—According to Strabo (xv. 3) his original name was Agradates: so that the name "Cyrus" was one of honour.

The only other instance of a person's being prophesied of by name so long previously is that of Josiah (1 K. xiii. 2); who (remarks Mr Birks) inflicted judgment on the idol-gods of Samaria, as Cyrus did on those of Babylon.

my shepherd] to gather My scattered flock, and care for them. Vitringa notices that, according to Xen. 'Cyr.' VIII, Cyrus himself was fond of comparing the duties of kings and shepherds.

even saying] It is still God who gives the mandate:—*saying* **of** *Jerusalem*, **She**...*and* **of** *the temple*, **Her**... There is no reasonable ground for doubting that the edict issued by Cyrus for the rebuilding of Jerusalem had its origin in this prophecy of Isaiah (see above, pp. 8, 10). Nothing, indeed, can be in itself more probable than that Daniel should have pointed out to the conqueror both this passage and the (no less definite) prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11).

Obs. The title "My Shepherd" recurs in Zech. xiii. 7;—of One, who is called by Jehovah, "The man that is My fellow." Both this title and that of "My Anointed" (in xlv. 1) shew that Cyrus, the actual liberator of the Jews, was also a type of the world's Saviour.—Thus two of the most eminent historico-typical personages (Cyrus and Melchizedek) were Gentiles; one at the commencement of the "Former" cycle of events, the other at the commencement of the "Later." Cyrus's work fitted him to prefigure the *Sun of Righteousness* (Mal. iv. 2), who should overthrow mystic Babylon,—the empire of darkness.

CHAP. XLV. 1. *to his anointed, to Cyrus*] Cast in the mould of Ps. xviii. 50; "to His anointed, to David." Compare the application of, "My sanctified ones" (xiii. 3), to the Medes.

The character of Cyrus has been admitted by both ancient and modern writers to have been singularly noble. Greek writers for the most part represent him to have been energetic and patient, just and prudent, magnanimous and modest, and religious-minded. Æschylus calls him "kindly," or, "gracious" (εὔφρων). Xenophon selected him as a model-prince for all nations. Plutarch says that "in wisdom and virtue and greatness of soul he appears to have been far in advance of all kings." Diodorus makes one of his speakers say that Cyrus gained ascendancy by his self-command and good feeling and gentleness. "The fundamental principle of worldly politics," says Delitzsch, "had been grasping selfishness; Cyrus, to his eternal honour, acted on purer principles." Lastly, there is no doubt that he was opposed to idolatry; and a worshipper of one God.

There is none like him in the ancient world. When we ask, how he came to be such, the answer—the only adequate answer—is supplied by these chapters. Cyrus was God's "anointed;" extraordinarily endued by Him with spiritual gifts. He had a special vocation from "the God of Israel" (*v.* 3); was "raised up by Him in righteousness" (*v.* 13); "loved" by Him, and chosen to "perform His will on Babylon" (xlviii. 14). Well

tions before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

5 ¶ I [a] *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

[a] Deut. 4. 35, 39. & 32. 39. chap. 44. 8.

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.

7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with

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might the faithful Israelite take courage, when he saw his captivity terminated by the appearance of this "new thing,"—a mighty ruler of nations zealous for goodness and justice and truth. Why should he not now resume hope, and look for a fulfilment of the yet more glorious predictions concerning *the* Anointed One?

to subdue nations]—so that "no nation which he attacked could escape him" (Herod. I. 204).

I will loose (or, ungird) *the loins of kings*] When Belshazzar saw the handwriting on the wall, "the bindings of his loins were loosed" (Dan. v. 6). Cp. Job xii. 21.

the two leaved gates] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 2, "*gates of* brass." Herodotus (I. 179) says that the gates of Babylon were of brass. On that festive night the gates on the bank of the river were left unbarred (ib. 191).

2. *the crooked places straight*] Or, "the rugged places (LXX. ὄρη) level." Cp. xlii. 16.—The second half of the verse is (probably) quoted in Ps. cvii. 16.

3. *treasures*] as those of the "Golden" City (Jer. l. 37, li. 13), and of Crœsus;—the latter being estimated (by Brerewood, in Hendn., on data supplied by Pliny) at more than 126 millions sterling.

I, the LORD...] Rather, *I* **am** *the Lord;* (I) **that call** *thee by thy name, the God of Israel.*

4. *I have surnamed thee*] Or, "designated thee;"—giving him those honourable titles, "My shepherd," "My anointed" (Del.): and his later name, *Cyrus* (xliv. 28).

though thou...] Or, "while thou knewest Me not." Long before he knew God, he was "known" by Him (Jer. i. 5). So Del.

5. *I girded thee*] as He girded David, "with strength" (Ps. xviii. 32; cp. on *v.* 1).

6. Several important movements in the direction of monotheism (notably, the Pythagorean, cp. Grote, 'Hist. of Gr.' III. p. 112) had their commencement about the time of Cyrus.

7. *create evil*] The "evil" which is the sure chastisement of sin (iii. 11; Amos iii. 6; cp. on ch. xxxi. 2).—Zoroastrianism, which arose, probably, soon after Cyrus's time, spoke of two Eternal Principles, light and darkness, which were perpetually at war. The present verse (Jerome) supplied, by anticipation, a corrective to that error.

8. The final aim of all God's providential acts was that the kingdom of heaven,—and therein righteousness and salvation,—should be planted upon earth.

Drop down] in showers (nearly *s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 1, "distil"); *let the skies* **stream** *down righteousness*, which must be supplied to the desert world "from on high" (xxxii. 15):—*let the earth open*, now that "the winter is over and gone," **that they may bear fruits of** *salvation;* **and let her cause** *righteousness* **to spring forth** (lxi. 11) **at once**.—The two words for "righteousness" are different;—the first (*tsedeq*) being rather the *norm*, or *the principle*, of righteousness, the second (*tsedaqah*) its embodiment in the character and conduct. The living principle descends from heaven, and the quickened earth shoots forth "trees of righteousness" (lxi. 3; the reversal of v. 7).—The latter word (*tsedaqah*) is used (as here) in parallelism with *salvation* in xlvi. 13, li. 5, 6, 8, lvi. 1, lix. 17, lxi. 10, lxii. 1.

9. This employment of Cyrus to be the

his Maker! *Let* the potsherd *strive*
[b] Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 20. with the potsherds of the earth. [b]Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

10 Woe unto him that saith unto *his* father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will ‖direct all his ways: he shall [c]build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

‖ Or, *make straight.*
[c] 2 Chron. 36. 22. Ezra 1. 1. chap. 44. 28.

14 Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, Surely God

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Lord's "shepherd" and "anointed one" was part of God's counsel; which none of His own people must call in question.

Let the potsherd...] This rendering is favoured by the recurring preposition, "with." Yet, as the verb could scarcely be dispensed with if the flow of the verse were so markedly interrupted, it is simpler to translate: "*Woe ...his Maker! a potsherd* **among** *potsherds of the earth*," — all made out of (lit.) *the ground* (Gen. ii. 7, *s. w.*). Israel had in itself no claim to stand above the rest of mankind. All alike were formed of the dust. (So Vulg., Syr., Knob., Stier, Del.)

Shall the clay...] Cp. xxix. 16, lxiv. 8 (Rom. ix. 20):—*or* shall *thy work* [O man!] say, *He hath no hands?*—which unbelieving Israel did practically say of his Maker. Be assured, that God formed thee at first, and is now creating thee anew,—as He at first formed the Gentiles, and is now about to create them anew,—with perfect wisdom and goodness.

10. *unto* his *father...*] Or, *to a father... to a woman.*—The questions express insolent discontent: *What begettest thou?...***Why travailest** *thou* (xxiii. 4, liv. 1, lxvi. 7, 8)? —If we, Israel, Thy children, are to be thus cast away, surely we were made in vain. To what purpose were those long throes of national agony, if Cyrus is to accomplish a greater work than David?

11. *to come concerning*] There should be a semicolon after *come*. "Inquire of Me the things that are to come,"—those future events, which will explain all that now (*v.* 15) is so mysterious to you;—and then, not before, "concerning My children and concerning the work of My hands ye may command Me;" *Me*, who (*v.* 12) have laid My commands on all the host of heaven, assigning to every orb its own place and duty.—How could they pretend to correct Him in the arrangement of His providential scheme, when they knew nothing of its future development, except so far as He was pleased to reveal it?

13. *I have raised him up* (xli. 25) *in righteousness* (xlii. 6)] to carry out the decrees which I the righteous Judge issue. (Cp. xi. 4, *s. w.*)

my captives] Lit. "My captivity" (*s. w. a.* Jer. xxix. 22). *He* had sent that captivity upon *His own people.*

not for **hire** *nor reward*] Jerusalem had been brought to ruin by rulers and priests, who pursued after "reward" and "hire" (Micah iii. 11, *s. w.*). It should be rebuilt by one, who acted from a disinterested regard for God's command (Ezra i. 1—4). God, who inflicted the captivity, was also the real author of the liberation. (Cp. lii. 3.)

14. In xliii. 3, Egypt, Kush, and Seba were given as Israel's "ransom." That political humiliation was to be followed by a different event:—they should surrender themselves to the Church, as willing trophies of God's power;—*in chains*, the indissoluble bonds of faith and love (cp. Ps. cxlix. 8; ch. lx. 11).

men of stature] That is, "tall" (Num. xiii. 32). The Sabeans are described by Agatharchides (Grotius) as singularly handsome.

fall down unto thee] Cp. Rev. iii. 9; 1 Cor. xiv. 25. The phrase, *make supplication unto*, is the same that is used in 1 K. viii. 35, 42; where it is rendered, *pray toward.*

Surely...] Lit. "Only in Thee is God (*El*), and there is none else, no God (*Elohim*) at all;"—none for one moment to be called by that Name.

is in thee; and *there is* none else, *there is* no God.

15 Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that* [d] *are* [d] makers of idols.

[d] chap. 44. 11.

17 *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.

[e] Deut. 30. 11.

19 I have not spoken in [e] secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

20 ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save.

21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for *I am* God, and *there is* none else.

23 I have sworn by myself, the

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15. This announcement of the Church's future glory draws from the prophet words of devout admiration: *Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself;* working in unsearchably mysterious ways; "hiding Thy face" from Israel (viii. 17, lxiv. 7), yet thereby preparing for a vaster display of Thy goodness as *Saviour.* (Cp. Eph. iii. 9.)—The LXX. has: "For Thou art God, and we knew it not" (cp. Gen. xxviii. 16);—singularly suited to be Israel's confession, when it shall recognize the world's Saviour.

16, 17. *They shall be...*] Rather, *They* **are** *ashamed...***are** *gone...Israel* **is** *saved* **by** *the* LORD (*s. w. a.* Deut. xxxiii. 29; cp. Hosea i. 7) *with an everlasting salvation;*—a deliverance unlike that first one from Egypt; the power of which seemed to be exhausted after 900 years. (Cp. Heb. ix. 12.)

18. *that created...*] Rather, *that created the heavens;* **the same** *is God; that formed the earth and made it;* **the same** *established it,...*

he created it not in vain] Hebr. *tohu:* "a waste;" a scene of disorder and barrenness;—such as Israel's sin made Palestine to be (Jer. iv. 23). He had brought light and order and life out of the waste earth (Gen. i. 2 f.); He would also rescue the world out of the confusion caused by man's sin, and make it the abode of "righteousness" (2 Pet. iii. 13).

19. *not...in secret* (xlviii. 16)]—but, from the first, openly; Deut. xxix. 29, xxx. 11. He did, indeed, hide Himself from them (*v.* 15); but that too had been openly proclaimed beforehand as the ordained penalty of rebellion (Deut. xxxii. 20).

in a dark place of the earth] **in a place of the land of darkness.** (Cp. Jer. ii. 31.)

Seek ye me in vain] Hebr. *tohu* (*v.* 18):—as men wandering in a trackless *desert* (Ps. cvii. 40, *s. w.*). *That* was the result of idol-worship (ch. xliv. 9, *s. w.*). God had not been to Israel "a wilderness, a land of darkness" (Jer. ii. 31). If they sought Him (Deut. iv. 29; Jer. xxix. 10—13), they would find Him ever kind and faithful.

I...speak righteousness, I declare **equity** (Ps. xcviii. 9)] Now, as of old, "*just* and *right* (*s. w.*) is He" (Deut. xxxii. 4).

20. The address now turns to those of the nations who "have escaped,"—who survive the judgment which has swept over the idolatrous world.

that set up] Rather, *that* **carry** (*s. w. a.* xlvi. 3, 4; cp. 1):—bearing them aloft in their processions (Jer. x. 5; Amos v. 26, *s. w.*).

21. *Tell ye...*] Or, **Shew** *ye and bring it* **forth** (*s. w. a.* xli. 22); state your case and adduce your evidence.—*Who hath* **shewed** *it from that time?* (See on xliv. 8.)

a just God and a Saviour]—uniting those attributes of justice and mercy, which in the government of a sinful race might have seemed incompatible (Rom. iii. 26). Cp. on *v.* 8.

22. *Look unto me*] Or, "turn unto Me" (*s. w. a.* xiii. 14, liii. 6; Deut. xxxi. 18, 20).

word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, /Rom. 14. 11. Phil. 2. 10. That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

24 [1]Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I [†]righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

[1] Or, *Surely he shall say of me, In the* LORD *is all righteousness and strength.* [†] Heb. *righteousnesses.*

CHAPTER XLVI.

1 *The idols of Babylon could not save themselves.* 3 *God saveth his people to the end.* 5 *Idols are not comparable to God for power,* 12 *or present salvation.*

BEL boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages *were* heavy loaden; *they are* a burden to the weary *beast.*

2 They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but [†]themselves are gone into captivity. [†] Heb. *their soul.*

3 ¶ Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

4 And *even* to *your* old age I *am* he; and *even* to hoar hairs will I carry *you:* I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you.*

5 ¶ [a]To whom will ye liken me, and make *me* equal, and compare me, that we may be like? [a] chap. 40. 18, 25.

6 They lavish gold out of the bag,

LXX. ἐπιστράφητε: cp. 1 Thess. i. 9.—The new Israel was to embrace

all the ends of the earth] as in lii. 10; Ps. xxii. 27.

23. *I have sworn by myself*]—the words used in the promise of blessing to *all nations*, Gen. xxii. 16 (cp. Heb. vi. 13). That most express promise from God's mouth (xlviii. 3) had *gone forth* (in) *righteousness* (so the Targum:—for the construction, cp. xlii. 25), and should *not return* (lv. 11), but advance victoriously; until every tongue should *swear* fealty to the one Lord (Rom. xiv. 11; Phil. ii. 10). The oath of allegiance itself follows in the first member of *v.* 24.

24. *Surely...*] Rather, **Only in the Lord (saith one unto Me) is** *righteousness and strength.* The "unto Me" is emphatic (lit. "Unto ME hath one said"), as in Ps. xxvii. 8. Every tongue shall make the confession to Jehovah Himself. The word for "righteousness" (properly, "righteousnesses," or "righteous acts") occurs in Israel's confession of sin, ch. lxiv. 4 (3). Apart from God they had no "righteous acts:" and were "without strength" (Rom. v. 6).

even to him] **Even to** *Him* (*s. w. a.* ix. 13) *shall* **one** *come;* in penitent *shame*, Ezek. xvi. 63. The words, *All they that* **were** *incensed*, &c., were used in xli. 11 in regard of the "Servant of the Lord."

25. *In the* LORD...] Cp. 2 Cor. v. 21; Phil. iii. 9. In 1 Cor. i. 31 this verse and Jer. ix. 23 are combined.

CHAP. XLVI. The contrast between the "God of Israel, the Saviour," and the helpless gods of heathenism had been made in xlv. 15, 20. It is now more specially applied to the deities of Babylon.

1. *Bel* **hath bowed** *down*] as one who sinks beneath a mortal wound, Judg. v. 27; 2 K. ix. 24.—*Bel* was probably (Gesen.) the same as Baal, the Phœnician sun-god. Others make Bel to have been the planet Jupiter, and Nebo the planet Mercury. The former name appears in *Bel*-shazzar, and Belteshazzar; the latter in *Nebu*-chadnezzar and *Nabo*-polassar. — According to Herodotus (i. 181—3), Xerxes carried away from the temple of Belus a golden statue, said to have been twelve cubits high.—*Their images* (in which *they*, Bel and Nebo, dwelt) *are upon* (lit. belong to) *the beasts* of burden.

your carriages...] Rather, **the things that ye carried** (in procession, xlv. 20), *are* **borne heavily** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 3), *a burden*, &c.

2. *They* **stooped,** *they* **bowed down at once**;—the deities did so, in despair; unable to rescue that heavy mass of metal, in which (lit.) "their soul" was supposed to reside; so that **their soul hath gone** *into captivity.*

3. *which are borne* (as a heavy load, *s. w. a.* in *v.* 1) *from the belly* (xliv. 2). Cp. Deut. i. 31.

4. *I am he*] unchangeably the same (xli. 4); even though the legal dispensation "wax old" (Heb. viii. 13).

6. *They lavish...*] Lit. "They that lavish...!" as if pointing to a picture; cp. xl. 22. No argument was needed.

and weigh silver in the balance, *and* hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.

7 They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, *one* shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring *it* again to mind, O ye transgressors.

9 Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; *I am* God, and *there is* none like me,

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, [b] My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, [†] the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that *are* far from righteousness:

13 I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

[b] Psal. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30. Hebr. 6. 17.

[†] Heb. *the man of my counsel.*

CHAPTER XLVII.

1 *God's judgment upon Babylon and Chaldea,* 6 *for their unmercifulness,* 7 *pride,* 10 *and overboldness,* 11 *shall be unresistible.*

COME down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

2 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet *thee as* a man.

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8. *Remember this*]—this impotence of the idol-gods; of which you were warned from the beginning, Deut. xxxii. 37—39: *and shew yourselves men* (or "stand firm," Vulg. "fundamini"); *bring it* **back** *to mind, O ye transgressors.* This last term shews that Israel is addressed; see xlviii. 8, "Thou wast called *a transgressor* from the womb." (Cp. i. 2, 28, xliii. 27, lix. 13, *s. w.*)

10. *My counsel* (or, plan)] Cp. xiv. 24; Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11.

11. *Calling from the* **sunrising** (xli. 2) **a bird of prey**; keen-sighted, swift, and strong, as the eagle or the vulture:—to cleanse the earth from this rank and foul mass of idolatry. Cyrus was singularly rapid in his movements. It is remarked, that he took for his ensign a golden eagle standing with outstretched wings on the top of a spear. (Xen. 'Cyr.' VII. 1.)

the man **of His** *counsel* (so the Kethiv) *from a far country*] Similarly in xiii. 5, of God's "sanctified ones."

12. *ye stouthearted*] Cp. xlviii. 4; Exod. xxxii. 9; Ezek. ii. 4, iii. 7; in which last the LXX. has σκληροκάρδιοι, the word used by Symm. here.

far from righteousness] because they had "removed their heart far" from God (xxix. 13).

13. *my righteousness*] Cp. xlv. 21—25. He would both *manifest* His own righteousness (Rom. i. 17), and communicate righteousness to "many" (liii. 11).

my glory] in whom the excellency of My grace will then be displayed (xliv. 23, lx. 21; Jer. xxxiii. 9).

CHAP. XLVII. Not only are the gods of Babylon proved to be impotent: Babylon herself, she who claimed to be eternal and peerless (*vv.* 8, 10), shall be desolated.

1. *virgin daughter*] Used of Tyre, xxiii. 12. Babylon boasted (Herod. I. 191) that she had never been captured.

sit on the ground: there is...] Rather, *sit on the ground* **throneless**, *O daughter of the Chaldeans* (xiii. 19), or, "of Chaldea" (as A.V. in Jer. li. 24, 35; cp. ch. xlviii. 20). Under the Persians the seat of empire was fixed at Susa.

2. She must now do menial work (Exod. xi. 5), and be led away as a captive.

uncover thy locks] Or (as LXX.), "thy veil" (see on Song of Sol. iv. 1):—*pass over the rivers*, away from thy own land, into exile.

3. *I will take vengeance*] issuing the decree, "as she hath done, do to her" (Jer. l. 15).

4 *As for* our redeemer, the LORD of hosts *is* his name, the Holy One of Israel.

5 Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

6 ¶ I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

[a] Rev. 18. 7. 7 ¶ And thou saidst, I shall be [a] a lady for ever: *so* that thou didst not lay these *things* to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.

8 Therefore hear now this, *thou that art* given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I *am*, and none else beside me; I shall not sit *as* a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:

9 But these two [b] *things* shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, *and* for the great abundance of thine enchantments. [b] chap. 51. 19.

10 ¶ For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath ‖ perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I *am*, and none else beside me. ‖ Or, *caused thee to turn away.*

11 ¶ Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know † from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to † put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know. † Heb. *the morning thereof.* † Heb. *expiate.*

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will not meet thee as *a man*] Or, "will not make terms with man." Others: "I will not spare man." In any case the meaning must be, that He would allow no human relentings; would admit no conditions of peace, as if it were a mere *human* question. The evil was far too deep-seated; had been of far too long continuance. It was full time for vengeance to step in; for in no other way could the work of redemption (*v.* 4) be accomplished.—So in Hos. xiii. 14, "I will ransom...I will redeem" is followed by, "repentance (or, relenting) shall be hid from Mine eyes." So too in xxxv. 4, 9, lix. 17—20, lxiii. 4, vengeance is the antecedent of redemption.

4. *our redeemer*] (xli. 14, xliv. 6). It is the exclamation of the Church (Isaiah and his "God-given" children) suddenly recognizing its vindicator. (Cp. xlv. 15.)

6. *I have polluted...*] *I* **profaned**...*and* **gave**. See xliii. 28.

upon the ancient] Or, *upon the* **aged didst** *thou* **make** *thy yoke very* **grievous**. This trait of inhumanity did (in the literal sense) mark Babylon's conduct towards Israel (Lam. iv. 16, v. 12; 2 Chro. xxxvi. 17; cp. Deut. xxviii. 50). But the allegorical sense (cp. *v.* 12) is better suited to the context.—Mere respect for the venerable "hoar hairs" (xlvi. 4) of Israel might have led the haughty "lady of kingdoms" to adopt a gentler demeanour.

7. *a lady for ever*] So Babylon's successor called herself "The Eternal City;" boasting that to her was given "imperium sine fine" (Virg.).

so that...] Lit. "until thou laidest not..." She repeated her boast, until at last she ceased to reflect upon *the latter end* (Jer. v. 31)—the final issue—of her pride and cruelty.

8. *carelessly*] without anxiety, or suspicion of danger (*v.* 10). According to Xenophon the Babylonians looked on Cyrus with contempt.

I am, and...] Arrogating to herself Divinity (xlv. 5, 6, xlvi. 9). Similarly of the later Babylon; "Terrarum Dea gentiumque, Roma; Cui par est nihil et nihil secundum." (Martial, XII. 8.)

9. *for...for...*] Or, "amidst" (as in *vv.* 12, 13). The security produced by her "sorceries" (Dan. ii. 2, 10) was one chief cause of her collapse being so sudden and so complete.—The same word, "sorceries," is used by Micah (v. 12, H. 11) in denouncing judgment upon Israel.

11. *evil*] The word that was used in *v.* 10 of their "wickedness;"—physical evil dogging the steps of moral.

from whence it riseth] Lit. "its dawning;" Vulg. "ortum ejus." That day of thy woe shall burst on thee unexpectedly, as without any *dawn*. It had, indeed, its premonitory signs, red and lowering; but thou, with all thy keenness of vision, couldst not discern them.—Others (Targum, Rashi, Stier, Knob., Del.); "how to deprecate it," or, "to charm it away."

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

13 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the †astrologers, the stargazers, †the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from *these things* that shall come upon thee.

14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver †themselves from the power of the flame: *there shall* not *be* a coal to warm at, *nor* fire to sit before it.

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, *even* thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

† Heb. *viewers of the heavens.*
† Heb. *that give knowledge concerning the months.*
† Heb. *their souls.*

CHAPTER XLVIII.

1 *God, to convince the people of their foreknown obstinacy, revealed his prophecies.* 9 *He saveth them for his own sake.* 12 *He exhorteth them to obedience, because of his power and providence.* 16 *He lamenteth their backwardness.* 20 *He powerfully delivereth his out of Babylon.*

HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness.

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12. *with...with*] Or, "amidst" (as in *v.* 9). Astronomy had been cultivated at Babylon from the earliest times; and astrology went with it.—At a later date, in imperial Rome, the terms *Chaldæi* and *mathematici* were nearly interchangeable.

if so be] Or, "perchance" (1 K. xviii. 27):—*thou shalt prevail*; or, "cause terror;"—so as to scare away the approaching evil.

13. She toils to no purpose. She is *wearied* and worn out, with the very *multitude of* her *counsels* (cp. lvii. 10). Yet, since she perseveres, the prophet challenges her to use her resources to the utmost. Cp. 1 K. xviii. 27; Jer. ii. 28.

Let now...] More exactly: "Let them stand now (*v.* 12) and save thee,—they that have portioned out the heavens, those star-gazers, prognosticating at each new-moon,—from the things that shall come upon thee." So A. Ezra and most commentators take the last clause; which seems deferred to the end of the verse for greater emphasis: "Let them save thee,—(yea, save thee) from the things that *shall assuredly come* upon thee,"—as had been said in *vv.* 9, 11. (Cp. on xliv. 7.)

14. Far from saving others, these wise men do not deliver themselves. *They* **are** *as stubble* (v. 24, *s.w.*) in the *flame* of divine wrath (x. 17, *s.w.*). They perish utterly, leaving no remnant of any value behind them; (cp. xxx. 14;) "*no coal at which a man may warm him, no fire* (or, light) *before which he may sit.*" It is a mass of *ashes*.

15. *Thus...*] Rather, **Of such worth unto thee are the things wherein thou hast toiled** (*v.* 12, *s.w.*): **they that trafficked with thee** *from thy youth* **have wandered** *every one to his* **own** *quarter* (cp. xiii. 14); **there is none to** *save thee.*

Obs. There is much in *vv.* 11—15 that seems meant to rebound on Jerusalem (as was the case in so many passages of Part I). Compare *v.* 11 with xxx. 13, xlii. 25; *vv.* 13, 15, "from thy youth," with liv. 6, Ps. cxxix. 1, 2, Jer. iii. 24, 25, xxii. 21:—*v.* 14 with v. 24, xxxiii. 11, xxx. 14:—and the emphatic "there is none to save thee" (*v.* 15, cp. *v.* 13) with Deut. xxviii. 29, 31, Jer. xi. 12. This tacit application is in agreement with the tone of rebuke in ch. xlviii. 1, 2.

CHAP. XLVIII. In the predicted downfall of Babylon,—whose magnificence had seduced even Hezekiah,—Judah might find reason to abandon for ever the unbelief which had marked its past history. Should it not now welcome its Saviour, and enter upon a new Era of Righteousness and Peace (*vv.* 16, 18)?

1. *Hear ye this*]—and recognize how vain human wisdom is apart from God.

and are come forth out of...] Rather, *and* **issued** *forth* (Ezek. xlvii. 8, 12) **from...** After the captivity of the ten tribes, Zion became confessedly the head of Israel: Judah was plainly "God's Sanctuary" (Ps. cxiv. 2). "Salvation was of the Jews" (John iv. 22). Hence to have issued (not merely from the "fountain of Israel," Ps. lxviii. 26, but) from "the waters of Judah" was made a subject of boasting.

make mention] As of an object of religious affiance; xxvi. 13. (Cp. Ps. xvi. 4, xx. 7;—it is in parallelism with "swearing" in Josh. xxiii. 7.) *Not in truth;—not* adhering to their

2 For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

3 I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass.

4 Because I knew that thou *art* † obstinate, and thy neck *is* an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

† Heb. *hard.*

5 I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

6 Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it?* I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

8 Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

9 ¶ For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 Behold, I have refined thee,

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oath of allegiance to God; cp. Jer. iv. 2; ch. lxv. 16.

2. *For*] This assigns the ground of the charge made in *v.* 1 (*not in truth*). *For they call themselves of the holy city:* yet, where is their holiness?—The Maccabean coins had on one side the inscription, "Shekel of Israel," and on the other, "Jerusalem the Holy."—The name, "The Lord of Hosts," was especially associated with the ark and temple; in other words, with the *holiness* of God. (Cp. 2 S. vi. 2; Ps. xxiv. 3, 10.)

3. *from the beginning*] Lit. "from that time" (*s. w. a.* in *vv.* 5, 7, 8; see on xliv. 8).

I did them...and] Or, *suddenly* I **wrought**, *and.* This is referred by Vitringa and others to Isaiah's earlier prophecies concerning Sennacherib. The context rather leads one to take it of the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Babylon; the "new things" being those that are soon to be announced in chh. xlix—lv.

4, 5. The prediction was meant to be an evidence of God's working. Cp. Deut. xxxi. 26—29.

6. *Thou* **heardest**; *see* **it all**:—see all that was published beforehand *fulfilled.*—*And will* **ye not yourselves** *declare* (*it*)? that others may believe what has been done. Or, since the verb is absolute, it may refer to their announcing the *coming* cycle of events; the *new things* which *from this time* were made known.

hidden things] Lit. "guarded," or, "reserved." Cp. Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. iii. 9 ("*the mystery*, which from the beginning of the world had been *hid in God*; who created all things by Jesus Christ." Cp. *v.* 7).

7. *They are created now*] Cp. xli. 20, xlii. 9, xliii. 7. What is hereafter to be spoken of relates not to the old series of Jewish history: but to a higher order of things, a new creation, which already is depicted as a reality in Isaiah's prophecies; **yea**, *before the day*, **and things** *thou* **hadst** *not heard* (or, indeed, heard of; cp. lxiv. 4).

lest thou shouldest say...] It would appear from *v.* 8 that this "lest" refers to the strong assertions made respecting the entirely *new* character of the things about to be spoken of. They had failed to "hear" properly, and "know" adequately, the teaching of the law. But the things about to be spoken of by the Evangelical prophet belong to a new order of things. Let them beware of thinking too readily that they *knew* their import.

8. *heardest not...*] Rather, **hast** *not* **heard...hast** *not* **known**, *yea, from that time* (*v.* 3) *thine ear* **hath** *not* **been opened**; and still continues closed:—*for* **I know** *that* (Deut. xxxi. 27) *thou* **wilt** *deal treacherously, and that* **thy name is**, *Transgressor from the womb.*—Moses had reproved Israel for their blindness at the beginning of the earlier cycle of Israelic history (Deut. xxix. 4, xxxi. 27): Isaiah uses similar language in regard to the later cycle.

9. *defer mine anger*] proving Myself (the words imply) "slow to anger;" as was said in the proclamation of *My name* (Exod. xxxiv. 6).

refrain for thee] Or, "towards thee:"—

but not [1]with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

11 For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it:* for how should *my name* be polluted? and [a]I will not give my glory unto another.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I *am* he; I *am* the [b]first, I also *am* the last.

13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and [1]my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* I call unto them, they stand up together.

14 All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these *things?* The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm *shall be on* the Chaldeans.

15 I, *even* I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 ¶ Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

17 Thus saith the LORD, thy Re-

[1] Or, *for silver.*

[a] chap. 42. 8.

[b] chap. 41. 4. & 44. 6. Rev. 1. 17. & 22. 13.

[1] Or, *the palm of my right hand hath spread out.*

"not suffering His whole indignation to arise" (Ps. lxxviii. 38).

10. *not with silver*] Rather, "not as silver:"—not for the sake of something in thee that is of intrinsic value, which I desire to obtain for My own enrichment. My refining is meant to create in thee a sense of thy *poverty*, in order that thou mayest be a fit recipient of My grace. *I have chosen thee* (by an act of free love) *in the furnace of affliction:* when thou hadst but one plea; "Look upon *my affliction*" (Ps. xxv. 18).—This later election had its prototype in the earlier, when God brought Israel "out of the iron *furnace*" (Deut. iv. 20, *s. w.*) because He looked on "their affliction" (Exod. iii. 7, 17; *s. w.*). LXX. ἐκ καμίνου πτωχείας.

11. *for how...polluted*] Or, **profaned** (Ezek. xxxvi. 21—23). *How* is it possible (xx. 6) that My name, which has been called upon thee, should be given up to profanation;—as if the work I set on foot for man's salvation had been defeated by the enemy?

12. *my called*] whom I summoned to My service (xli. 8).

13. *spanned*] Or, *spanned* **out** (cp. li. 13).

14. Once more the nations are challenged to say which of their deities has foretold the work that the Lord has willed to perform on Babylon.—Cyrus is here alluded to in language, which seems studiously designed to prepare for the coming forward of Him who will soon occupy the whole field of vision.

The LORD *hath loved him*] The expression used in 2 S. xii. 24 of Solomon, the builder of the first temple, is applied to Cyrus, who would authorize the building of the second temple. Cyrus, no less than Solomon, prefigured the Builder of the final Temple; who could say, "*Thou lovedst me* before the foundation of the world" (John xvii. 24).

he will do...] He will **perform** His (the Lord's) pleasure (xliv. 28).

and his arm shall be...] Or, *even with his own arm* (will he execute God's will) *on the Chaldeans.*

15, 16. *I, even I, have spoken*] The speaker here is evidently the Lord: cp. xlv. 19, xlvi. 11. Plainly too, it is He who says in *v.* 16, "I have not spoken in secret;" cp. xlv. 19. Yet at the end of *v.* 16 He says, "The Lord hath sent me." The explanation is supplied by a comparison of Prov. viii.—In *v.* 23 of that chapter divine Wisdom (speaking in *the most public places*, *vv.* 1—3) says, "I was set up from everlasting, *from the beginning* (*s. w.*)," and in *v.* 27, "When He established the heavens, *I was there* (*s. w.*)." Then in *v.* 32 she turns to the sons of men, saying, "And now" (*s. w.*).—It is, then, the "Wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24) that speaks here. He had arranged the plan for Israel's correction (xxviii. 29). He also would call Cyrus and speed him on his way. And *now*, He Himself was commissioned to undertake a loftier work of liberation. (Cp. on xxxii. 1, 2.)

I have not spoken in secret] Almost the very words uttered by our Lord, John xviii. 20, as He was entering on the last great act of His servitude (when Isai. l. 5—7 was literally fulfilled).

the Lord GOD (*s. w. a.* vii. 7, xl. 10, &c.) *hath sent me, and his Spirit.* Such is the order of the Hebrew, which is rightly kept by LXX. and Vulg. (Dominus Deus misit Me, et Spiritus Ejus). The mission is from the Lord God; whose Spirit effectuates the mission (cp. lxi. 1). The mystery of one divine Person being *sent* by another, recurs in Zech. ii. 8, 9, 11 (H. 12, 13, 15).

The words, "The Lord hath sent me," and, "I AM hath sent me," were put into the mouth of Moses at the beginning of

deemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go.

18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

19 Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

20 ¶ Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it *even* to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath [c] redeemed his servant Jacob.

[c] Exod. 19. 4 5, 6.

21 And they thirsted not *when* he led them through the deserts: he [d] caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

[d] Exod. 17. 6. Numb. 20. 11.

22 [e] *There is* no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

[e] chap. 57. 21.

Israel's recovery out of Egypt (Exod. ii. 14, 15, vii. 16). The same expression is frequently used by our Lord of Himself (John v. 24, vi. 44, 57, viii. 42). Cp. on ch. viii. 6. For the rendering, see Note A.

17. Now, then, a new dispensation is opening out before Israel: and,—as at the commencement of the old one (Deut. v. 29) —God Himself breathes forth His longing desires for their welfare.

teacheth thee to profit] giving thee real good, such as the world's boasted wisdom could not give (xlvii. 12; cp. xxx. 5, 6, xliv. 9, 10, lvii. 12; 1 S. xii. 21). Even the severest discipline had this end (Heb. xii. 10).

18. *O that thou hadst...*] Rather, *Oh that thou* **wouldest** (cp. lxiii. 19, Hebr.)*...then* **should...be.** He speaks as One who "upbraideth not" (James i. 5). The past has been blotted out (xliv. 22). *A new* career of peace and prosperity is offered them. The voice is the same as that which said, "*How often* would I have gathered thy children!" (Luke xiii. 34). Cp. Deut. xxxii. 29; Ps. lxxxi. 13; 1 S. xii. 20.

as a river] Or, *as* **the** *river*. Targ. "as the overflowing of the river Euphrates." (Cp. viii. 7.) On the conjunction of *peace* and *righteousness*, cp. xxxii. 17; Ps. lxxxv. 10.

as the waves of the sea] burying in oblivion all former unprofitableness (Micah vii. 19).

19. *had been...*] **should be**...*his name* **should not be.**—*As the sand*, x. 22.

the gravel thereof] Vulg. "lapilli ejus." (Similarly Aq., S., Th.; Vitr., Ew., Del.)

from before me] So as that he should cease to stand *before Me* as My royal, priestly, and prophetic people for ever (see 1 K. xi. 36; Jer. xxxiii. 18; Jonah i. 3). Cp. lv. 13.

20. *flee ye*] as at the Exodus from Egypt, Exod. xiv. 5 (*s. w.*).

utter it...] **let it go forth even to.** In itself the liberation of Israel out of Babylon might seem to be a matter of little moment for the world at large. But it was the prelude of, and a preparation for, the world's redemption; cp. xlix. 7.

21. The Church would still (as at the Exodus) have to journey through deserts; but (xli. 17) waters from the Rock (Exod. xvii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 4) would follow them.

22. In *v.* 18 *peace* had been associated with *obedience*. It could not be had on any other terms. Under the New Covenant peace should go forth as a mighty river; yet under it, as under the Law, the rebellious must dwell "in a parched land" (Ps. lxviii. 6). For them there is *no peace* (cp. 2 K. ix. 22)—only implacable war.—The same warning recurs in lvii. 21; *after* the promise "*Peace, peace*, to him that is afar off and to him that is near."

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 16.)

The Targum and the accents, as well as the Vulg., support the A. V. It has been generally assumed, on the authority of Origen, that the rendering of the LXX. is ambiguous. But even his great name is not sufficient to persuade one that in Κύριος ἀπέστειλέ με καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ, the enclitic με can be readily co-ordinated with the following noun. Neither will the agreement of Vitr., Hendn., Alex., Del., Knob., &c. establish the possibility of the suffixed pronoun in the Hebrew being so co-ordinated. (Ch. xxix. 7, quoted by Del., is quite different, see the note.) For such a meaning we should have needed אותי ואת־רוחו.

CHAPTER XLIX.

1 *Christ, being sent to the Jews, complaineth of them.* 5 *He is sent to the Gentiles with gracious promises.* 13 *God's love is perpetual to his church.* 18 *The ample restoration of the church.* 24 *The powerful deliverance out of captivity.*

LISTEN, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

3 And said unto me, Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my judgment *is* with the LORD, and [1]my work with my God.

[1] Or, *my reward.*

5 ¶ And now, saith the LORD

CHAPS. XLIX—LV. A vision had just been presented of a new Israel, enjoying the covenant blessing of Peace (Num. vi. 26), and whose "name *should not be cut off.*" Will it be realized? or will it be frustrated by human frailty, and remain only an idea?

The answer is explicit. Israel after the flesh has failed (xlix. 5); but the "Servant of the Lord" shall work out a salvation which shall extend "unto the end of the earth" (ib. 6). There should now be revealed an "everlasting salvation," a "righteousness never to be abolished" (li. 6, 8). God would "make bare His holy arm before all nations" (lii. 10). One who should be "high and lifted up and very exalted" (lii. 13), would endure marvellous sufferings, that He might procure "our peace" (liii. 5), and make many righteous (ib. 11). Great should then be the peace of Israel's children (liv. 13), resting on an immoveable "covenant of peace" (ib. 10), an "everlasting covenant" (lv. 3). So the Church should "go out with joy, and be *led forth with peace*;" and "be to the Lord *for a name*, for an everlasting sign that *shall not be cut off*" (lv. 12, 13: cp. xlviii. 19).

CHAP. XLIX. We henceforth hear no more of Babylon and Cyrus. The controversy with the idolaters is at an end. The evidence afforded by prophecy of Jehovah's being the one only God is no more referred to. *That* lesson has been well learnt by the Jews, who are returned from Babylon. They have a deeper lesson now laid before them; will they listen to it and ponder it?

1. *hearken, ye* **peoples**] The invitation is nearly the same as in xli. 1, where the Lord was the speaker. It is an enlargement of the old "HEAR, O ISRAEL" (Deut. vi. 4).

from the bowels of my mother] (Ps. lxxi. 6). Israel, as a nation, had been borne by God "from the womb" (xlvi. 3; cp. xliv. 2, 24). Now, when the personal "Servant of the Lord" is introduced, reference is made to His *mother* (as in Ps. xxii. 9, 10).—The name of "Jesus" was mentioned by the angel at the time of the Annunciation (Luke i. 31).

2. *my mouth*] Cp. xi. 4; (Rev. xix. 15). His warfare (unlike that of Cyrus) would be spiritual. Cp. li. 16.

in the shadow...hid me] Keeping me, until "the fulness of time," within the mystery of the Divine Counsel (1 Cor. ii. 7; Col. i. 26).

in his quiver hath he **kept me secret** (Job xiv. 13)] He previously brought into use many other arrows (as Isaiah himself), which were "very sharp...in the heart of His enemies;" but this "polished shaft" was reserved for the crisis of the war.—Schmieder remarks: "He is both the sword in God's hand, and the arrow shot forth from it:—*with* God, yet *sent forth* from Him."

3. *And said unto me* (Ps. ii. 6, cx. 1), *Thou art my servant,* **Israel**, *in whom...*] The *nation* had caused God's name to be blasphemed (lii. 5); God's Servant would stand as a new federal Head, a true "Israel," or "Prince with God;" and in Him God would be *glorified* (*s. w. a.* xliv. 23, lx. 21, lxi. 3). LXX. ἐν σοὶ δοξασθήσομαι. Cp. John xii. 28, xiii. 31, xiv. 13, xvii. 1, 4.

4. *Then I said*] Or, "And as for me, I said." All the labour that had been bestowed on Israel during 700 years was apparently *spent...for nought and* **vanity** (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxix. 5).

Obs. Shortly after St John had mentioned the voice from heaven, which said, "I have both glorified (Thy name), and will glorify it again" (xii. 28), he adds, "but, though He had done so many miracles among them, yet they believed not on Him;" and proceeds to quote Isai. liii. 1.

yet surely...] Or, **nevertheless** (Ps. xxxi. 22)...*my* **reward** (as in marg.; see xl. 10) *is with my God;*—the Just One, who will not suffer any labour of love to be "in vain" (1 Cor. xv. 58; Heb. vi. 10).

5. *And now, saith...*] Rather, *And now* **the Lord hath said,**—**He** *that formed me,*

that formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, ‖Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

‖ Or, *That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, &c.*

6 And he said, ‖It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the ‖preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a [a] light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

‖ Or, Art thou *lighter than that thou shouldest, &c.*

‖ Or, *desolations.*

[a] chap. 42. 6.

7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* his Holy One, ‖to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, *and* the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

‖ Or, *to him that is despised in soul.*

8 Thus saith the LORD, [b] In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to ‖establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

[b] 2 Cor. 6. 2.

‖ Or, *raise up.*

9 That thou mayest say [c] to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places.

[c] chap. 42. 7.

&c.; (*v.* 6) **He hath even said**:—the remainder of *v.* 5, after "said," coming in parenthetically.

to bring **back** *Jacob unto him*—back from his wanderings (Ps. xxiii. 3; Ezek. xxxix. 27).

Though Israel...] Rather, **But** *Israel* **will not** *be gathered; yet shall I be glorious;*—*s. w. a.* in xxvi. 15; where, in like manner, God's name is honoured, while Israel has been removed to "the ends of the earth." A remnant was converted; though Israel as a whole refused to be gathered.

The Keri reads "to Him" for "not"; and so Targ., Aq., Rashi; Vitr., Del. This introduces an unnatural construction: and the Kethiv is supported by Symm., Theod., Jer. It is not easy, indeed, to conceive that what looks like a sentence of national reprobation should have ever established itself in the text, if it had not been the true reading.

6. *It is a light thing*] Or, **too light** *a thing.* Israel had come to look on itself as possessed of exclusive privileges;—a view altogether *derogatory* to God's glory. Even to re-establish Israel in its entirety would have been a small thing; but—how few were *the preserved of Israel,* who survived the successive national judgments (*s. w. a.* Ezek. vi. 12)!

7. *whom man despiseth*] Or, "whom *the soul* despiseth;"—an object of contempt to the sensual mind. *Whom the nation* (i. 4, x. 6, *s. w.*) *abhorreth;—because* He is Holy (xxx. 11). *A servant of rulers;* subjecting Himself to the despotic will of "the rulers of this world" (1 Cor. ii. 6), even to the extent of enduring the death of a slave (ib. 8).

and arise] from off their thrones;—rising, that they may do homage (*v.* 23, lii. 15).

8. *In an acceptable time...*] Or, *In a time* **of acceptance** *have I* **answered** *thee.* The word for "answered" is the same that occurs in Ps. xxii. 21; where a Sufferer, who had been "a reproach of men and *despised of the people*" (*v.* 6), receives an answer from God in the crisis of His agony, and proclaims that "all *the ends of the earth* shall remember and turn unto the Lord" (*v.* 27). *For a covenant of the people* (xlii. 6); to be the basis of a Covenant, by which *a people* shall be constituted;—"not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles" (Rom. ix. 24—26).

to establish] Rather, **raise up** (*v.* 6);—out of its long degradation. *To make them inherit* (Deut. iii. 28; Josh. i. 6) the lands so long desolated by superstition and sin.

St Paul, who in Acts xiii. 47 quoted *v.* 6 as supplying a practical direction to himself and Barnabas in their apostolic work, (so entirely did he identify himself with his Master,) adduces the present verse, in a similar way, in 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2: the connexion of which with v. 14, 21 shews that he understood by, "the time of acceptance," the period in which God had "reconciled the world unto Himself" by means of One who suffered vicariously for mankind.

Obs. 1. Mr Cheyne, who follows Rückert in grouping together chh. xlix—lvii, gives as the title of the whole section; "VICARIOUS ATONEMENT."

Obs. 2. In lviii. 5 the Day of Atonement is referred to as "the day of *acceptance.*" Cp. the same noun in lvi. 7, lx. 7, 10, lxi. 2; Exod. xxviii. 38.

9. *to the prisoners*] (xlii. 7) in the dungeon of spiritual darkness;—in the prison-house of Hades (xxiv. 22). Literally fulfilled (as Vitr. remarks), when Jesus said; "Lazarus, *come forth.*"

9, 10. His scattered children (John xi.

[d] Rev. 7. 16.

10 They shall not [d] hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

12 Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

13 ¶ Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

14 But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

15 Can a woman forget her sucking child, [†] that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

[†] Heb. *from having compassion.*

16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.

17 Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

18 ¶ [e] Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, *and* come to thee. *As* I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them *on thee*, as a bride *doeth*.

[e] chap. 60. 4.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow

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52) are then compared to a flock, whom the good Shepherd, *He that hath* **compassion** *on them* (*s. vv. a.* in *vv.* 13, 15), is leading homeward. They shall *feed* **by** *the ways, and on all* **bare hill-tops** (xli. 18) *is there* **pasturage for them.**

the heat] of the burning sand (xxxv. 7, *s. w.*; the only other place where it occurs).

11. *my mountains*] The kingdoms, which He by His providence had called into existence, should be made subservient to the progress of His Church: "mountains" at His bidding becoming "plains" (Zech. iv. 7).

12. *the land of Sinim*] The identification of *Sinim* with *China*, proposed by Arias Montanus († 1598), and rejected by Vitr. as "quite improbable," was fully vindicated by Gesenius (in 'Thes.'), and is now generally accepted.—According to Lassen (in Gesen.) the name *Tsin* was known as early as B.C. 1122. It may well, therefore, have been known to the Phœnicians. Porcelain with Chinese inscriptions has been found in the Egyptian monuments at Thebes (Wilkinson, III. p. 108).

14. This calling of the Gentiles into the Church was Zion's true glory (ii. 2—4; Ps. lxxxvii. 5). But, in the meantime, she seemed *forsaken*. The actual Zion was so (vi. 12); but a glorious future was in reserve for her (lx. 15, lxii. 4).

16. *I have graven thee*] A picture, or plan, of thee (Ezek. iv. 1). *Thy walls* have been hurled down by the Chaldeans; but they exist in full integrity *before Me*, in far nobler forms than thou conceivest of (xxvi. 1, lx. 18).

17. *Thy children* **have made** *haste*, coming from distant lands before thou wast prepared for it;—thy children, by whom thou shalt be built: while *thy destroyers*, they that would overthrow thee, thy unfilial children (Vitr. compares the *οἱ ἀναστατοῦντες ὑμᾶς* of Gal. v. 12—15), *shall go forth of thee*, shewing that they do not belong to the heirs of blessing. (Cp. 1 John ii. 19.)

The word for "make haste" is the one used in viii. 1, 3. Then it was, "*Plunder* speedeth;" now they who had been carried away captive are hastening homewards. (Cp. li. 14, lviii. 8.)

18. *these...***are** *come to thee*] Lit. "for thee;" to be thy own.—They should be to her as *an ornament*, a gold or silver head-dress (2 S. i. 24; Jer. ii. 32); for she is now again a joyous bride. Ever "since Horeb" (Exod. xxxiii. 6), when she violated her vows of betrothal, the Israelic Church had put off her joyous "ornament" (*s. w.*). Now she resumes it vastly increased in splendour.

and bind them on] as an embroidered sash (iii. 19), which fastens the bridal attire.

19. She, whose domain was lately a solitude, is now at a loss for room. Lit. "For as to thy waste places and desolations and thy land of overthrow, truly now shalt thou be **straitened** (*v.* 20) by reason of inhabitants." LXX. *στενοχωρήσει* (2 Cor. vi. 12).

by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20 The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

21 Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where *had* they *been*?

22 Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* †arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders.

† Heb. *bosom.*

23 And kings shall be thy †nursing fathers, and their †queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and ‡lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

† Heb. *nourishers.* † Heb. *princesses.* ‡ Psal. 72. 9.

24 ¶ Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or †the lawful captive delivered?

† Heb. *the captivity of the just.*

25 But thus saith the LORD, Even the †captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

† Heb. *captivity.*

26 And I will feed them that op-

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they that swallowed thee up] *s. w. a.* iii. 12 (cp. ix. 16, H. 15).

20. *The children...*] Lit., "Sons of thy bereaved state **shall yet say**, &c." She should yet live to hear sons, who have been born to her while she thought herself childless, say; *Give place to me* (Gen. xix. 9):—make room for me; press on, or, suffer me to press on, into "the regions beyond" you (2 Cor. x. 16); for the world is now our heritage.

21. She recognizes them to be her veritable children, though she had not known of their birth. She had thought herself **childless** *and desolate* (or, "barren," see on Job iii. 7, xxx. 3); *a captive and a* **wanderer**, finding no home in the lands of her captivity; and *left alone;* the word used by Elijah, when he knew not of the 7000 faithful men in Israel.

22. *the Lord GOD*] "The Lord Jehovah," l. 4, 5, 7, 9.

will...set up my standard to the **peoples**] Cp. xi. 10, 12. The language here (as in other parts of these later chapters) seems capable of a nearer, and a more remote, application. It may refer to services performed by nations, as political communities, to the Church Catholic:—it seems, at the same time, to point to some future restoration of Israel.

23. *thy nursing* (or, **foster**) *fathers*]—employed by thee to take care of thy children. So in 2 K. x. 1, Ahab's "foster-fathers" (*s. w.*) were those to whom he had entrusted his children.

lick up the dust of thy feet] We see from Ps. lxxii. 9, Micah vii. 17, that the language refers to those who had been enemies or persecutors. They would now fall prostrate, and kiss the ground on which the Church stood or walked (Del.).

24. The announcement appears to Zion scarcely credible. Her captor was not only *mighty*, but, as God's instrument for the punishment of sin, had a lawful claim upon them. (Vitr. compares Ezek. xxiii. 45.)

the lawful captive] Lit. "the just one's captives." The Chaldean, cruel oppressor as he was, avenged the wrongs of God's law. It was really the all-Righteous (Dan. ix. 14) who had "brought the evil upon them."—So, too, as regards the redemption of man from the "strong one" (Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 21), who had "the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14):—it was sin that gave death its sting, and "the strength of sin is *the law*" (1 Cor. xv. 56). None can deliver from *that* captivity, if he be not able to meet the demands of the law.

The LXX. for "prey" has σκῦλα, *s. w. a.* Luke xi. 22.

25. The answer is that "the prey of the terrible (one)" (*s. w. a.* xiii. 11, xxix. 5) shall be rescued: and this by the Righteous One. (Cp. on xxxi. 4, 5.)

For I **Myself** *will contend*, before the tribunal of justice (l. 8), *with him that contendeth with thee*, maintaining thy cause against the accuser; and "who will contend with Me" (l. 8)? "*It is God that justifieth;* who is he that condemneth?" (Rom. viii. 32, 33.)

Cp. John xii. 31, xvi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 26.

26. *I will feed...*] Or, *I will* **let** *them...***eat** *their own flesh* (cp. ix. 20). In their pride

press thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own
e Rev. 14. 20. & 16. 6. ‖ Or, *new wine.* e blood, as with ‖ sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

CHAPTER L.

1 *Christ sheweth that the dereliction of the Jews is not to be imputed to him, by his ability to save,* 5 *by his obedience in that work,* 7 *and by his confidence in that assistance.* 10 *An exhortation to trust in God, and not in ourselves.*

THUS saith the LORD, Where *is* the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

2 Wherefore, when I came, *was there* no man? when I called, *was there* none to answer? a Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I b dry up the sea, I make the c rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because *there is* no water, and dieth for thirst.
a Numb. 11. 23. chap. 59. 1.
b Exod. 14. 21.
c Josh. 3. 16.

3 I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* d weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.
d Matth. 11. 28.

5 ¶ The Lord GOD hath opened

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and jealousy "they devour one another" (Gal. v. 15):—as the antagonist factions did in Jerusalem during the Roman siege.

the mighty One of Jacob] See on i. 24.

CHAP. L. This chapter is an expansion of xlix. 25 ("I myself will contend"). None had any rightful claim on Zion. She was still the espoused of the Lord. Her children, indeed, had bartered away her freedom; and God had sanctioned the temporary separation: but He had never divorced her, or given up His parental rights over them. Israel's sins had caused a separation (cp. lix. 2); but One now came forth, "the Servant of the Lord" (*v.* 10), who would bear the extremity of oppression and shame, (evidently, in order to fulfil xlix. 25, to defend all who "hearken to His voice," *v.* 10;) but would come forth abundantly victorious.

1. *whom I have put away*] Or, **wherewith** *I have put* **her** *away* (LXX., Vulg.). The "bill of divorce" (Deut. xxiv. 1, 2) was a complete severance of the marriage bond. Such a divorce had been issued against Israel (Jer. iii. 8), but not against Judah. Neither had He (the Creator, and infinitely the creditor, of all) been reduced to the necessity of *selling* His children into bondage (2 K. iv. 1). They were still *His*, whenever He chose to assert His right to them.

for...for] Or, **by...by.** They *sold themselves* (Lev. xxv. 39, 47) for nought, lii. 3; to be servants of sin, 1 K. xxi. 20. (LXX. ἐπράθητε, cp. Rom. vii. 14.) It was through *their* transgressions, not *hers*, that she was put away. Zion had always included a faithful remnant; for whose sake the covenant was upheld in force. Yet *the whole community* was placed under ban.

2, 3. There was no defect either of *love* or of *power* in God (cp. lix. 1). Not of love;—He had Himself *come* and made gracious overtures to them, which they rejected. Not of power;—He was still the same, who, for Israel's deliverance, had "rebuked" the Red Sea (Ps. cvi. 9; cp. ch. li. 10), changed the Nile waters into blood (Exod. vii. 18 *f.*), clothed the heaven as with a mourning garment (Exod. x. 21).—All along, Divine Wisdom had had reason to lament that "when She called, they refused" (Prov. i. 24). When at length the Word of God came in person (John i. 11, v. 43), even He was rejected by them.

4. He "came" (*v.* 2); the Lord, yet a Servant (*v.* 10);—to *do God's will* (Ps. xl. 7). His ministry is here described.

The Lord GOD] "The Lord Jehovah:" and so in *vv.* 5, 7, 9.

of the learned] Or, "of disciples" (viii. 16, liv. 13, *s. w.*).

to speak a word in season...] So LXX. The verb occurs here only. The rendering of Aq. and Vulg., "to support" (which is also countenanced by the Arabic), is followed by most moderns:—"to sustain by a word him that is weary" (cp. xxviii. 12).

wakeneth mine ear...] He had an immediate and uninterrupted communication of the divine word; and was ever ready *to hear* **as they that are disciples.** (Cp. John viii. 28, xii. 50.)

mine ear, and I was not [e] rebellious, neither turned away back.

6 [f] I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

7 ¶ For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

8 [g] *He is* near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is* [t] mine adversary? let him come near to me.

9 Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

10 ¶ Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.

11 Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. [h] This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

[e] John 14. 31. Phil. 2. 8. Hebr. 10. 5, &c.
[f] Matth. 26. 67. & 27. 26.
[g] Rom. 8. 32, 33.
[t] Heb. *the master of my cause?*
[h] John 9. 39.

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5. *opened mine ear*] The contrast of xlviii. 8. *God's word has free access into His heart* (cp. Ps. xl. 6—8); so that He—the Servant—complies with the will of God to the uttermost (cp. Phil. ii. 6—8). He *rebelled not;* as Israel had from the first done (lxiii. 10, *s. w.*): *neither turned away backward;* the phrase used in the "Psalm of Martyrs" (Ps. xliv. 18). The profession there put into the mouth of the Church had its complete realization in Him.

Obs. St Paul, after referring to *v.* 8 of this chapter in Rom. viii. 33, 34, goes on to quote Ps. xliv. 22.

6. *I gave...*] Hence the "stripe-wounds" of iii. 5. *Spitting* was an expression of contemptuous abhorrence (Job xxx. 10).—As in other prophecies, so eminently in those of l—liii, many of even the lesser details (which might have seemed only pictorial imagery) had a literal fulfilment. (See Matt. xxvi. 67, xxvii. 30; Luke xviii. 31—33.)

7. *set my face*] *s. w. a.* Jer. xxi. 10; where (as Del. notes) the LXX. has ἐστήρισα τὸ πρόσωπόν μου, the words used in Luke ix. 51.

8. *that justifieth me*] Acquitting Him from the charge on which He had been condemned. —That charge was, that, in claiming to be *the Son of God*, He had committed blasphemy. The resurrection "justified" Him (Rom. i. 4; cp. 1 Tim. iii. 16).—In Rom. viii. 33, 34, all the faithful are empowered to use the challenge of this verse; for in Christ's justification theirs is included (Rom. iv. 25).

stand together] before God's tribunal (Deut. xix. 17; Zech. iii. 1).

is *mine adversary*] Or, "hath a claim against me." (Cp. the Hebrew in Exod. xxiv. 14.)

9. *wax old*] LXX. παλαιωθήσεσθε: used in Heb. viii. 13 of the decay of the elder dispensation.

the moth...] li. 8; Ps. xxxix. 11. It is the figure of corruption working slowly from within. First, idolatry, and then self-righteous formalism, ate away the substance of the national constitution.

10. The interrogation is after the clause, *that* **hearkeneth to** *the voice of His Servant:* the following clause being equivalent to, "though he walk," "what time he walketh." Cp. Micah vii. 8, 9.

This exhortation was greatly needed by the Church in the later half of Hezekiah's reign. Still more need of it would there be in the gloomy period which followed Hezekiah's death.—They could have no stronger encouragement than was supplied them in the example of the Servant of the Lord; Himself subjected to deepest contumely, yet triumphantly victorious.

11. Instead of "hearing the voice" of God's Servant (John x. 27), there were some who would try to relieve the darkness of temporal calamity by fanaticism or superstition. That would be to "kindle a fire" which should burn far otherwise than they thought, —to their own destruction (Deut. xxxii. 22; Jer. xv. 14). It would be, to **gird on** them *sparks*, or (as most take it), "firebrands" (nearly *s. w. a.* Prov. xxvi. 18); of which they would themselves be the victims.

in the light...] Rather, **amid the flame ...amid the** brands. They might, in their frenzied zealotry, do this for a while; but the hand of divine justice had already assigned them their just sentence; "In sorrow shall ye lie down" (xliii. 17). Instead of the repose they had promised themselves, they shall "lie down" amidst pain and anguish; "lie down" to a perpetual sleep, Jer. li. 57.

CHAPTER LI.

1 An exhortation, after the pattern of Abraham, to trust in Christ, 3 by reason of his comfortable promises, 4 of his righteous salvation, 7 and man's mortality. 9 Christ by his sanctified arm defendeth his from the fear of man. 17 He bewaileth the afflictions of Jerusalem, 21 and promiseth deliverance.

HEARKEN to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

3 For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

5 My righteousness *is* near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,

CHAP. LI. In l. 10 the faithful Church was addressed as consisting of those, who "hearkened to the voice of the Lord's Servant." He here invites them to listen to Him (*vv.* 1, 4, 7); not now as the suffering Son of Man, but as the Ruler and Saviour of the world (*vv.* 4, 5, 6).

1. *that follow after righteousness*] making it an object of earnest *pursuit*. LXX. *οἱ διώκοντες* (cp. Rom. ix. 31). This was the work that was so emphatically laid upon Israel in Deut. xvi. 20; "Righteousness, righteousness, shalt thou follow after" (*s. w.*). There, indeed, its application was to social justice: it is now used of those who "had God's law in their heart" (*v.* 7), and pursued after "the righteousness of God" (Matt. vi. 33).

ye that seek the LORD] The true Jacob, Ps. xxiv. 6; cp. ch. xlv. 19.

the rock...the pit] Co-ordinated with Abraham and Sarah in *v.* 2; but in such a way as to suggest a vivid contrast. Whence were those living stones quarried, of which the house of Israel was built? Was it from one who was as "good as dead" (Heb. xi. 12; Rom. iv. 19), and from his aged and barren consort? As an outward historical fact, it was: in reality, it could not be so. *Really* their origin was the plenitude of Creative Power.—This reference is made certain by a comparison of Deut. xxxii. 18, "*the Rock* that *begat thee*...God that *formed thee*;" where the word for "formed" is the same that is used in *v.* 2 here of Sarah.

Let not Zion, then,—seemingly "barren" (xlix. 21),—despond. She shall be fruitful (liv. 1). Let the faithful imitate him, who in that hour of darkness on Moriah "stayed himself upon his God" (l. 10), and thereby became "heir of the world" (Rom. iv. 13).

2. *unto Abraham*] xxix. 22, xli. 8.

I called him alone] Or, "when he was one, I called him;" see Ezek. xxxiii. 24. He was but a single lifeless stone on the world's desert surface (cp. Matt. iii. 9), when My "call" (Rom. iv. 17) quickened him, and made him "a father of many nations." So God would bless and increase penitent Israel (Deut. xxx. 5, 16).—The "For" of *v.* 3 implies that the "blessing" bestowed on Abraham was again shewing its vitality.

3. *shall comfort ...*] **hath comforted** *Zion*, **hath comforted** *all... and* **made.** Zion is plainly the correlative of Sarah;—"the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26; cp. ch. liv. 1, 2).

like the garden of the LORD]—as was signified, when it was said that "all the families of the [accursed] *ground* should be blessed" (Gen. xii. 3) in Abraham.

4. *Hearken...*] **Attend** (Prov. vii. 24), *O my nation.* This last expression [*leümmi*] occurs here *only;* as a similar one (*goyi*) *only* in Zeph. ii. 9 (cp. Ps. cvi. 5).

a law shall **go forth** (ii. 3) *from me*]—forth, into all nations. (Cp. xlii. 4.)

make...to rest]—reposing at last on a stable basis. *A light of the* **peoples** (and so in *v.* 5): cp. ii. 5, xlii. 6, xlix. 6.

5. *is near*] and so (lvi. 1) ready to be revealed.

the isles shall wait **for** *me*] The speaker here being He, of whom it was said in xlii. 4, "the isles shall wait for His law."

6. The actual arrangements of the visible world are upheld by Him, who established them (cp. Heb. i. 3). If His "Word of power" were withdrawn, they would "vanish."—How rapidly such a disappearance of

and look upon the earth beneath: for
[a] Psal. 102. 26. Matth. 24. 35. [a] the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 ¶ Hearken unto me, ye that
[b] Psal. 37. 31. know righteousness, the people [b] in whose heart *is* my law; [c] fear ye not
[c] Matth. 10. 28. the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9 ¶ Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. *Art* thou not it that hath cut Rahab, *and* wounded the [d] dragon? [d] Psal. 74. 13, 14. Ezek. 29. 3.

10 *Art* thou not it which hath [e] dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? [e] Exod. 14. 21.

11 Therefore [f] the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; *and* sorrow and mourning shall flee away. [f] chap. 35. 10.

12 I, *even* I, *am* he that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou

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the "heaven and earth that now are" (2 Pet. iii. 7) might take place, recent discoveries in science help us in some degree to conceive; for we know that what once appeared to be the most tranquil and least mutable of visible things, the sun, has forces of tremendous energy constantly at work upon it.

in like manner] Rather, **as** *in like manner;* as though subjected to the law of change which pervades the physical world. Such, in general, is the rendering of LXX., Aq., Syr., Targ., Vulg.—There is an emphasis on the word *die* (cp. *v.* 12), which should be retained at whatever sacrifice of rhythm:—*and* **her inhabitants, as** *in like manner, shall die.* This is what gives point to the antithesis in the second member of the verse. Man is conformed to the same law of perishableness as the outward world; but *in a far worse way.* They decay: he suffers the penalty of sin, and DIES. That this heaven and earth, specially prepared to be man's residence, should at length wear away or be dissolved, contains in it nothing which shocks our sense of moral fitness: that man, made in the image of God, should turn to corruption, does. Is man, then, not to be restored to righteousness, and thereby to attain eternal salvation?

and my righteousness]—which I, the Righteous One, am introducing (liii. 11). *Shall not be abolished;* or, "dismayed" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 7, xxxi. 4). It shall hold on its course with the calmness of infinite Power and Wisdom, Holiness and Love.

Obs. In Gen. xv. 5 the childless patriarch was bidden to "look toward heaven and number the stars;" and then it was said, "So shall thy seed be." But what comfort was there in mere physical multiplication of offspring for one who was pursuing after *righteousness* (ib. 6)? Until *righteousness* and *salvation* were effectively established by One, who should be in reality—what Isaac was in figure—triumphant over death,—the blessing on Abraham would remain imperfect.

7. *ye that know*] No longer only, "that seek" (*v.* 1): for they have His "law in their heart" (cp. Ps. xl. 8).

the reproach of men] Hebr. *enosh:* "frail man" (and so in *v.* 12).

neither be ye afraid of (or, "dismayed at," *v.* 6) *their revilings;* at the bitter sarcasms of the enemy, who taunts you with the apparent failure of God's plans (*s. w. a.* xliii. 28). How little reason there was for the Church to be dismayed at such "revilings," had been seen in the typical history of Sennacherib (xxxvii. 6, 23).

9. *Awake*] (lii. 1). It is the cry of the Martyr Church, Ps. xliv. 23.—*Arm of the Lord;* xxx. 30, xl. 10, liii. 1; Ps. xliv. 3.

that hath cut...] Or, *that* **hewed** *Rahab* (xxx. 7) **in pieces,** *that* **pierced** *the dragon* (xxvii. 1). Cp. Job xxvi. 12, 13.

11. *Therefore*] Or, **So:**—when that Arm shall have clothed itself with strength. This verse is the same as xxxv. 10; except that the absence of one letter in the Hebrew makes the last clause run: *sorrow and sighing* **are fled** *away.*

12. *he that comforteth*] *s. w. a.* Lam. i. 2, 9, 16, 17.

who art thou...] Art thou the bride of the Eternal? whom He rescued of old from

shouldest be afraid [g] of a man *that* shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made [h] *as* grass;

13 And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he ‖ were ready to destroy? and where *is* the fury of the oppressor?

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

15 But I *am* the LORD thy God, that [i] divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

16 And I have put my words [k] in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

17 ¶ [l] Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, *and* wrung *them* out.

18 *There is* none to guide her among all the sons *whom* she hath brought forth; neither *is there any* that

[g] Psal. 118. 6.
[h] chap. 40. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 24.
‖ Or, *made himself ready.*
[i] Jer. 31. 35.
[k] chap. 49. 2, 3.
[l] chap. 52. 1.

Pharaoh? whom He has just delivered from the Assyrian?

13. *of the oppressor*] Lit. "of him that distresseth;" *s. w. a.* xxix. 7. LXX. τοῦ θλίβοντος. *As though* (Job x. 19) *he* **had made ready** *to destroy* (*s. w. a.* xxxvi. 10, xxxvii. 12);—as if thy destruction must needs follow, when the merciless enemy's plans appeared to be so complete and his force so overwhelming.—Yet how soon was Pharaoh, how soon was the Assyrian, deprived of his intended prey!

where is...] Where is it, when thou hast thy God "comforting thee" (*v.* 12)? Fear not *man*, then (viii. 12): fear only "the fury of the Lord" (*vv.* 20, 22), which is the consequence of thy own sin. (Cp. xxvii. 4.)

14. *The captive exile*] *s. w. a.* lxiii. 1, ("*travelling*"). In the only other places where the word occurs (Jer. ii. 20, xlviii. 12) it is taken by A.V. to mean, "wander." Perhaps, the rendering of LXX. in Jer. xlviii. 12 (κλίνοντες, Vulg. "stratores") is the one that has fewest difficulties.—Where is the fury of him, who made that terrific onslaught? Did Sennacherib,—did even the King of Terrors,—succeed in destroying Hezekiah? Nay:—*He that was bent down* **hath made haste to be loosed; and he shall not** *die in the pit*,—lit. "unto the pit," so as to *belong to* the pit of *corruption* (xxxviii. 17, *s. w.*), which seemed already to have claimed him for her own,—**neither shall his bread fail** (cp. xxxiii. 16).

15. *But I am...*] Or (xli. 17), "**And I**, the Lord thy God, **am He** that stirreth up (see on Job xxvi. 12) the sea." That rushing, roaring, tide of enemies (v. 30, xvii. 12) was sent by Him;—it could not exceed the limit He had assigned it (Jer. v. 22; Ps. xlvi. 3). Cp. Jer. xxxi. 35 (a quotation, probably, from Isaiah).

The LORD *of hosts*] whose omnipotence guaranteed His people's safety.

16. *I have put my words in thy mouth*] Who, then, can the Person here addressed be, but the Great One of whom God said to Moses, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and *will put My words in His mouth*" (Deut. xviii. 18, *s. w.*; cp. John iii. 34)? The same terms are employed in ch. lix. 21.

Obs. Isai. li. 12—lii. 12 is the Haftarah to Deut. xvi. 18—xxi. 9.

that I may plant the heavens]—the *new* heavens (lxv. 17). The verb is used of the *planting* of Paradise (Gen. ii. 8). The "Paradise of God" (Rev. ii. 7) shall be to the universe, what that first Paradise was designed to have been to the earth,—its central Fountain of Life.—Lit. "to plant;" which is equally capable (cp. xlix. 8) of the sense given by Vulg., "that thou mayest plant."

17. *Awake,...*] Or, **Rouse thyself** (not *s. w. a.* in *v.* 9, and lii. 1). The vision of Zion given in *v.* 16 was in strange contrast to the actual condition of the city which was lying prostrate in death-like stupor:—having drunk *the cup of trembling* (or, as A.V. in Ps. lx. 3, "of astonishment,"—of dizzying horror. Cp. the cognate noun in Zech. xii. 2). *Wring them out*; *s. w. a.* Ps. lxxv. 8.

18. *none...among all the sons*] None of these,—king, or prophet, or righteous man—could *guide*, or (xl. 11) "gently lead," her back to comfort and peace.

brought forth...brought up] The words used in Tyre's lament, xxiii. 4.

that taketh her by the hand] in order to raise her up.

taketh her by the hand of all the sons *that* she hath brought up.

19 [m] These two *things* [f] are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and [f] destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?

20 Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.

21 ¶ Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:

22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God *that* pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

23 But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

[m] chap. 47. 9.
[f] Heb. *happened.*
[f] Heb. *breaking.*

CHAPTER LII.

1 *Christ persuadeth the church to believe his free redemption,* 7 *to receive the ministers thereof,* 9 *to joy in the power thereof,* 11 *and to free themselves from bondage.* 13 *Christ's kingdom shall be exalted.*

AWAKE, [a] awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

[a] chap. 51. 17.

2 Shake thyself from the dust; arise, *and* sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Obs. In *v.* 17 and lii. 2 the Hebrew for "arise" is the word recorded by St Mark (v. 41) to have been used by our Lord, when He "*took the damsel by the hand*, and said unto her, *Arise*" (*Cumi*). *He* alone could lift Jerusalem out of her deadly sleep.

19. *two things*] Probably (so A. Ezra and Kimchi), the two things are described, first in general terms, as "**wasting** and destruction" (lix. 7, lx. 18), and then more particularly, as "famine and the sword;"—the famine inside, the sword outside (Deut. xxxii. 25; Ezek. vii. 15; cp. xiv. 21).

who shall be sorry for thee?] Rather, *who will* **mourn with** *thee?* Cp. Job ii. 11, "to *mourn with* him, to *comfort* him" (both verbs the same as here). Poor solitary Zion has none to condole with her; and even her unchangeable Friend asks, *How shall I comfort thee?*—lit. *who?* in what form or capacity? (Vitr., after Cocceius, who compares the Hebrew of Amos vii. 2, 5: and so Knob., Del.) Simply as the Holy One, He could not do so. To comfort her, He must take the form of a servant.

20. *a wild bull*] Or, **an antelope**; swift and strong and handsome; but hunted down into the net; and now exhausted with fruitless attempts to escape. (See on Deut. xiv. 5.)

21. *thou afflicted*] *s. w. a.* liv. 11, x. 30. *Drunken, but not with wine*, xxix. 9.

23. *to thy soul*] with disdainful reproaches aimed at the soul's humiliation. Ps. cxxiv. 5; "The proud waters had *gone over our soul*."

thou hast laid...] Rather, *thou* **didst place thy back** (l. 6) *as the ground.* She had fallen with her face to the earth in utter despair. She that was the "Perfection of Beauty" was "cast down from heaven to earth" (Lam. ii. 1): and "the plowers plowed upon her back" (Ps. cxxix. 3; Micah iii. 12).

CHAP. LII. The words, which the supplicating Church had used in li. 9, are now addressed to *her*.

1. *Awake*] Thy Lord needs no awakening; awake thou to righteousness (1 Cor. xv. 34; Eph. v. 14). *Put on thy strength;* making the good confession, "only in the Lord is righteousness and *strength*" (xlv. 24). *Put on thy* **garments of beauty**:—*s. w. a.* Exod. xxviii. 2 (of Aaron's priestly robes).

the uncircumcised and the unclean] Israel had been "uncircumcised in heart" (see on xiv. 28); "a people of unclean lips" (vi. 5): therefore the uncircumcised and unclean were allowed to *come into* the gates of Jerusalem (Lam. iv. 12). But now that she had become in truth the "Holy City," none of the unclean could approach her (xxxv. 8). Cp. Nahum i. 15.

2. *from the dust*] in which thou hast been lying as one dead (xxvi. 19).—*Arise* (li. 17), *sit down;*—the reverse of the command given to Babel; "Come down, and sit in the dust." Zion is to arise and sit "on a throne of glory" (Targ.).

loose thyself...] Rather (Kethiv; Targ.), *the bands of thy neck* **are unloosed**;—they have fallen off at the sound of God's voice; as "the

3 For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

4 For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into [b] Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

[b] Gen. 46. 6.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day *is* [c] blasphemed.

[c] Ezek. 36. 20, 23. Rom. 2. 24.

6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak: behold, *it is* I.

7 ¶ [d] How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

[d] Nahum 1. 15. Rom. 10. 15.

8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

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chains fell off" from Peter's hands, when the angel "raised him up" from sleep; saying, *Arise up quickly* (Acts xii. 7).

3. *Ye have sold yourselves* (l. 1) *for nought*]—gaining nothing by it. He, who bought you to be his slaves, gave no "valuable consideration" for you; and therefore has no claim to any price for your redemption.—The redemption will be made *without money* (cp. lv. 1): for, since it was "through their *iniquities* that they were sold" (l. 1; Jer. xv. 13), liberation from that captivity can be effected only by their iniquities being taken away (liii. 6, 11: cp. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

4. The general statement of *v.* 3 is illustrated by a reference to history. In old time, Israel had not deserved ill of Egypt. They had been invited to go down *to sojourn* there, as the relatives of Egypt's great benefactor (Gen. xlv. 18; cp. Wisdom of Sol. xix. 14—16). It was malignant jealousy that led to their oppression. So too, as regarded the Assyrians;—they were influenced by imperial ambition. Both Pharaoh and Sennacherib oppressed Israel in order that they might triumph over Israel's God. In each case, there was causeless oppression.

5. So should it be now with oppressed Zion. God would return (*v.* 8) and vindicate her rights.

what have I here]—*here*, apart from the suffering Church (cp. 1 K. xix. 9, 13). What do I, while Zion is prostrate (li. 17, lii. 1), as though I took no interest in her welfare (lxiii. 15, lxiv. 12); while My people are in the land of pollution (*v.* 11)?—The context shews that the object present to the eye of the speaker is, *Zion*. It is from Zion that the messengers are seen *upon the mountains* (*v.* 7); from Zion that the injunction is issued, "Go ye out *from thence*" (*v.* 11).

make them to howl]. As the verb is not elsewhere causative, it is better to render, *make a howling* (*s. w. a.* xiii. 6, xv. 2, xxiii. 1, 6, 14, lxv. 14). The rulers of Israel (xxviii. 14) are overtaken by despairing grief (Jer. xxv. 36; cp. Hos. vii. 14).

every day] Rather, **all the day** (li. 13; Ps. xliv. 22). His name was spoken of contemptuously, as if He had been unable to save His people.

6. *shall know my name*]—*know* it, so as to reverence it (Ps. xci. 14); because it has been verified in act (cp. Jer. xvi. 21).

behold, it is I] Lit. "behold Me," or, "here I am" (*s. w. a.* lviii. 9, lxv. 1). He, who had "spoken at sundry times, and in divers manners," of old, now intervenes personally. Cp. xl. 9, "Behold, your God."

7. *upon the mountains...*] of Judæa; cp. xl. 9. In Nahum i. 15 we have the words, "upon the mountains...peace," used in a similar context;—after mention of the destruction of the "counsellor of Belial." (See on xxxii. 7.)

of him that bringeth good tidings...] Primarily, Messiah Himself (*v.* 6; lxi. 1; Acts x. 35; Eph. ii. 17); then, His envoys (Rom. x. 15; 2 Cor. v. 19, 20).

Obs. Eph. ii. 17 combines Isai. lii. 7 and lvii. 19.

Thy God reigneth] (see on Ps. xciii. 1). This was the substance of the "glad tidings;"—whence, in Mark i. 14, we read, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the *Gospel of the Kingdom of God*." Cp. Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35; Luke viii. 1; Acts xxviii. 23, 31.—So long as the oppressor had sway, God's *sovereignty* appeared to be in abeyance.

8. *Thy watchmen shall...*] Rather, **The voice of thy watchers! They have lifted up the voice; they shout joyfully together.** They who looked forth from their watch-tower (xxi. 6), "waiting for the consolation of Israel," rejoiced because they "saw the Lord's Christ" (Luke ii. 25—38).—*Eye to eye;* no longer seen in prophetic vision, but personally present.

9 ¶ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

10 The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and [e] all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

11 ¶ [f] Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing;* go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel *will* [†] *be* your rereward.

13 ¶ Behold, my servant shall [‖] deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

14 As many were astonied at thee; his [g] visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

15 So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths

[e] Psal. 98. 3. Luke 3. 6.

[f] 2 Cor. 6. 17. Rev. 18. 4.

[†] Heb. *gather you up.*

[‖] Or, *prosper.*

[g] chap. 53. 3.

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shall bring again Zion] So Vulg. Better (as Kimchi),—**returneth to** *Zion* (cp. Num. x. 36; Deut. xxx. 3). Targ. "bringeth back His Shekinah to Zion."

9. *Break forth...*] See on Ps. xcviii. 4 (*s. w.*), and pp. 508, 9 (Vol. IV).

10. *hath made bare...*] Cp. liii. 1. The Church had prayed (li. 9), "*Clothe thee with strength*, O arm of the Lord:" The prayer was fulfilled by the arm's being *laid bare*:—the robe of kingly dignity being thrown aside, that the arm might be ready for battle (cp. Ps. lxxiv. 11). So it was, when "the Word was made flesh," divesting Himself of His glory, that He might enter into conflict with man's enemy.

11. *Depart ye...*] Or, **Away! away!**—The words are used in warning one not to approach that which is polluting; Lam. iv. 15.—*Go ye out*: *s. w. a.* xlviii. 20.

be ye clean] Or, "purify yourselves;" LXX. ἀφορίσθητε (quoted in 2 Cor. vi. 17).

that bear the vessels...] The work of the priests (Num. iv. 15, 24, 32; Ezra viii. 24 f.).

12. Great indeed was the need of this sanctification; for the redeemed host would be encompassed with the glorious presence of God Himself. Their march would not be, as on that passover night, *in haste* (Exod. xii. 11; Deut. xvi. 3, *s. w.*). The Lord would *go before* them (cp. Micah ii. 13), and be their *rereward*, or, rear-guard (Exod. xiv. 19).

13—15. These three verses, while they form a striking preparation for ch. liii (an overture to the "Great Passional"), are yet closely related to the preceding twelve verses. They tell us how that vast host, which was to go forth to occupy the "holy city" (*v.* 1), shall be cleansed. God's exalted Servant "shall *sprinkle* many nations" (*v.* 15), thereby purifying them from "uncleanness."—The word rendered "sprinkle" is frequently used in connexion with the word in *vv.* 1, 11, which is rendered "unclean." So on the Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 14—19) the high-priest was to *sprinkle* the altar with blood, and "cleanse it and hallow it from all the *uncleanness* of the children of Israel." (Similarly in Lev. v. 2, 3, 9, xiv. 44, 51; Num. xix. 17—22.)

13. *my servant*] who had been presented in l. 5—7. as exposed to the lowest indignities. But, in the midst of all, He *shall deal prudently*, with meek and calm wisdom, ever keeping the great end in view (Heb. xii. 1, 2), and therefore He "shall prosper," and "have good success" (Josh. i. 7, 8; Jer. xxiii. 5, *s. w.*). Nay, *He shall be* **high and lofty** (*s. ww. a.* in vi. 1, lvii. 15) *and very* **exalted** (*s. w. a.* in v. 16): all three words being used (in the passages cited) of "the Lord of Hosts."—So in Phil. ii. 6—9, He who took upon Him "the form of a servant" is "highly exalted," and receives "a name which is above every name." (Cp. on xlv. 23.)—LXX. ὑψωθήσεται (Acts ii. 33).

14. *As many were astonied at thee*] **According as....** The verb is used in Lev. xxvi. 32, Jer. xviii. 16, of the amazement with which men should gaze on the desolation of Israel's land:—here of Him, who is "bearing Israel's iniquity" (liii. 11) The remainder of the verse is parenthetical, assigning the reason of their astonishment. *So*—to such a degree—*was His visage marred more than any man* (or, unlike a man's), *and His form more than* (or, unlike that of) *the sons of men*. (Cp. Ps. xxii. 6.)

15. *So*] The antithesis to 14 *a*. *As* His degradation was most surprising, exceeding any in human history; *so* shall His exaltation be. *Many* had looked wonderingly on Him as a wretched criminal; now He shall purify not "many," but *many nations* (Del.). *Sprinkle*. See Note A.—Aq. and Theod. here have ῥαντίσει (*s. w. a.* Heb. ix. 13, x. 22; cp. xii. 24; 1 Pet. i. 2).

the kings...] Or, **because of Him kings**

[a] Rom. 15. 21. at him: for *that* [h]which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

shall shut their mouths, in reverential awe (cp. Job xxix. 9; xl. 4).

that which...] The reason of their deep silence. *They* **have seen**, and had clear evidence of, an event such as had never *been told them*; and *they* **have understood** (Ps. cvii. 43), and apprehended practically, a mystery which they had never *heard* (cp. lxiv. 4).

Obs. In Rom. xv. 21 the last verse of ch. lii is quoted in illustration of the readiness of the Gentiles to receive these new truths. In Rom. x. 16 the first verse of ch. liii is quoted as a complaint of Israel's unbelief.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 15.)

The verb נָזָה (in the Hifil) occurs elsewhere 19 times; *always* in the sense of *sprinkling* with a view to ceremonial purification. It has been urged, that the verb has regularly an accusative of the liquid which is used in sprinkling, the object sprinkled being preceded by עַל. This, however, is to forget that in the passage before us the verb refers, not to a literal process of *sprinkling*, but to an act of purification *analogous* to that which was effected by ceremonial sprinkling. Hence the Syriac renders it, "shall purify." It is obvious that ῥαντίζω was employed by Aq. and Theod. in this *derived* sense with a like change of construction.—Vulg. "asperget."

CHAPTER LIII.

1 *The prophet, complaining of incredulity, excuseth the scandal of the cross,* 4 *by the benefit of his passion,* 10 *and the good success thereof.*

WHO [a]hath believed ‖our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him

[a] John 12. 38. Rom. 10. 16.
‖ Or, *doctrine.*
† Heb. *hearing.*

CHAP. LIII. The messengers have gone forth to "publish peace" (see lii. 7, LXX. εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης). Many kings and nations have received the tidings with reverence (lii. 15). Yet Israel, in the midst of whom the wondrous work of atonement is effected, refuses to believe the message (liii. 1, LXX. τίς ἐπίστευσε τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;). The prophet, therefore, takes his stand by the side of his people, confesses their misapprehensions, and points out, with the most earnest reiteration, what the truth of the matter is. There are no fewer than *eleven* expressions in this chapter, which clearly describe the VICARIOUS character of the sufferings endured by the Lord's Servant.

(1) "He bore our griefs;" (2) "He carried our sorrows;" (3) "He was wounded for our transgressions;" (4) "Bruised for our iniquities;" (5) "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him;" (6) "By His stripes we are healed;" (7) "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" (8) "For the transgression of My people was He stricken;" (9) "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin;" (10) "He shall bear (or, carry) their iniquities;" (11) "He bare the sins of many."

In (9) the sacrificial nature of these sufferings is directly stated. But to a people, whose approach to God was limited throughout by the indispensable condition of expiatory offering, all these sayings of the prophet were calculated to suggest the thought:—"Here, then, in the voluntary sufferings and death of this righteous Servant of the Lord, we have the reality to which our whole ritual system has been for centuries pointing. Here, at last, we have the seed of Abraham, who can accomplish in very deed what was only foreshadowed in Isaac's history:—who can die willingly, because it is His Father's 'pleasure' that He should be a substitute for guilty man; and yet can rise from the dead to be the parent of a numerous seed, the heirs of blessing."

The terms, "iniquities," "transgressions," and "sins," which all occur here, gather in like manner around the work of the high-priest on the "*Day of Atonement*" (Lev. xvi. 16, 21, 22, 30, 34). The expressions in *vv.* 11, 12, "*carry* their iniquities," and, "*bare* the sin of many," are parallel to the one used in Lev. xvi. 22; where it is prescribed that the scape-goat (over whose head Aaron had confessed "all the *iniquities* of the children of Israel and all their *transgressions* in all their *sins*," *v.* 21) should *bear upon him all their iniquities* into a land not inhabited."—The word for "sprinkle" (lii. 15) is used *four* times in Lev. xvi (*vv.* 14", 15, 19).

The chapter falls naturally into four parts, each containing three verses (like Ps. ii):—(1) The outward humiliation and inward suffering of the Lord's Servant; (2) was caused by our sins, which were laid upon

as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and ‖ † we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he *was* ‖ wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our

b chap. 52. 14. Mark 9. 12.
‖ Or, *he hid as it were* his *face from us.*
† Heb. *as a hiding of faces from him,* or, *from us.*
c Matth. 8. 17.
‖ Or, *tormented.*
d Rom. 4. 25.
e 1 Cor. 15. 3.

Him; (3) He Himself being innocent, yet submitting Himself in perfect resignation; (4) for which He shall have a full, soul-satisfying, reward.

Of the various interpretations of this chapter, see Note A.

Obs. This chapter is quoted in Matt. viii. 17; Mark xv. 28; Luke xxii. 37; John xii. 38; Acts viii. 28—35; Rom. x. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 21—25; and is referred to in John i. 29; Rom. viii. 34; Heb. ix. 28.

1. *Who hath believed* (vii. 9) *our report?*] Or, "message" (xxviii. 9, 19). The immediate reference may be to lii. 7 (see above); but the complaint was applicable to the whole revelation of which the prophet had been the bearer:—to the tidings concerning "Immanuel," the "Prince of Peace," the "Rod out of the stem of Jesse," the "Sure Foundation," the "Righteous King," the "revealed glory of the Lord."

the arm of the LORD] (xl. 10). It has been "made bare before all nations" (lii. 10); but who among us, the Jews, has had eyes to see it stretched forth (lit.) *over* (A. V. "to") us? (The word for "revealed" is the same as in xl. 5.)

2. *For he shall grow up*] Rather, *For He* **grew up** *as a tender plant before Him:*—a feeble "sucker," outwardly; yet evermore "before" God (Hos. vi. 2), with His favour resting upon Him (xlix. 5; cp. Luke ii. 40).—The subject is still the Servant of the Lord (lii. 13—15), who is spoken of in *v.* 1 as the "Arm of the Lord."

as a root out of a dry ground] (xli. 18)—like one of those plants in the desert, which have a large "succulent root full of fluid," though the surrounding earth and air "seem utterly devoid of moisture" (Dr Macmillan, 'B. T. in Nat.' p. 211). The "dry ground" is not so much the Jewish people (at that time, religiously, socially, and politically desolate), as the barren soil of human nature.

no form]—So marred was His "form" (lii. 14, *s. w.*).

and when we **saw** *him, there* **was** *no beauty*]—*s. w.* *a.* lii. 14, "visage." The A. V. rightly adheres to the Hebrew punctuation (so, too, Stier, and Del.).

3. *He* **was** *despised*] Cp. xlix. 7.

rejected of men] The Hebrew is difficult; but it probably means: "ceasing to be of men;" of so mean appearance that He "was no longer reckoned with men" (A. Ezra). The Vulg. has; "novissimum virorum."

a man of sorrows] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 4; Exod. iii. 7; Lam. i. 12, 18; used especially of pains which accompany a wound or disease. (In Matt. viii. 17, νόσους.)

acquainted with grief] Or, "sickness;" *s. w. a.* in *v.* 4, i. 5, xxxviii. 9; LXX. μαλακίαν. (Matt. viii. 17, ἀσθενείας.)—*Acquainted with* it, as its familiar friend.

and we hid...] Lit. "as one from whom there is hiding of face:"—whether this be God's face, averted from sin (cp. viii. 17, l. 6, liv. 8, lix. 2; Deut. xxxi. 18); or man's, shrinking from a horrible sight. The rendering, "as one who hid his face from us" (LXX., Vulg., Rashi), cannot be sustained grammatically; and Lev. xiii. 45 does not warrant the assertion that the leper hid his *face*, but only that he covered his *lips*.

4. *Surely*] Or, **But verily** (*s. w. a.* xlix. 4); implying that their view was strangely contradictory to the actual truth.

he hath borne...] Lit. "our sicknesses did He bear; as for our sorrows, He carried them;"—carried, as a heavy burden, to relieve us from their yoke. (Cp. the noun in Exod. vi. 6, 7.)

stricken] The word used in 2 K. xv. 5, of God's striking Uzziah with *leprosy*. The noun is used of the leprosy *fifty-seven* times in Lev. xiii, xiv. The Vulg. (following Aq. and Symm.), "as a leper."—Hence the notion (so common in Talmudic writings) of Messiah Ben Joseph's being a leper.

smitten] *s. w. a.* Num. xiv. 12; Deut. xxviii. 22.

and afflicted]—cast into a state of deep and lasting humiliation (*s. w. a.* Exod. i. 11, 12; Ps. lxxxviii. 7, xc. 15).

5. *wounded for...*] Or, **pierced** (Ii. 9, *s. w.*) **because of...crushed** (Lam. iii. 34, *s. w.*) **because of.** There are no stronger terms in the language (remarks Del.), than are here used to signify the extremity of the Sufferer's affliction.

the chastisement of our peace] by which we, who were enemies, might be reconciled to

peace *was* upon him; and with his [e] stripes we are healed.

6. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD [f] hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet [g] he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a [g] lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 [h] He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people [i] was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his [k] death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* [l] deceit in his mouth.

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to

[e] 1 Pet. 2. 24.
[f] Heb. *bruise.* [f] Heb. *hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him.*
[g] Matth. 26. 63. & 27. 12. Mark 14. 61. & 15. 5. [g] Acts 8. 32.
[h] Or, *He was taken away by distress and judgment: but, &c.*
[i] Heb. was *the stroke upon him.*
[k] Heb. *deaths.*
[l] 1 Pet. 2. 22. 1 John 3. 5.

God. "Chastisement" (says Schmieder) "is pain inflicted on offenders to bring them to a better mind; but here, by the wondrous grace of God, the innocent willingly endures suffering, that the guilty, who lay it to heart, may be healed."—So only could the "Covenant of Peace" (liv. 10) be established.

with his stripes] Or, "stripe-wounds," wales (*s. w. a.* i. 6).

we are healed] Lit. "it is healed to us;"—the unusual expression carrying us back to Lev. xiii. 18, 37, xiv. 3, 48 ("the plague is healed"); where the same word occurs (in that precise form, there *only*).

6. *have turned*] *s. w. a.* Deut. xxxi. 18.

laid on him] Lit. "hath caused to meet him;" as when the avenger of blood *met* the manslayer (Num. xxxv. 19, 21; cp. Amos v. 19; *s. w.*). The guilt of all mankind was made to concentre on His single person.—Symm. Κύριος καταντῆσαι ἐποίησεν εἰς αὐτόν. —The Good Shepherd encountered the ravening lions, and laid down His life to recover the helpless, wandering, sheep (John x. 11, 15, xi. 50—52).

7. *He was oppressed* (iii. 5)] as by an unrelenting creditor (Deut. xv. 2, 3, *s. w.*).

and he was afflicted...] Rather, **yet He submitted Himself** (*s. w. a.* Exod. x. 3), in voluntary self-abasement, **and** *opened not His mouth;* **as a lamb** (Gen. xxii. 7, 8; Exod. xii. 3, 5, *s. w.*) **that is** *led to the slaughter* (Jer. xi. 19), *and as a sheep* **that is** *dumb before her shearers:* **yea, He opened** *not His mouth.* The whole clause, "as a lamb ...shearers," is an expansion of the preceding, "He opened not His mouth;" which clause is then, with great emphasis, repeated by itself in the last member of the verse.

8. *He was taken...*] Or, "Through **oppression** (Ps. cvii. 39, *s. w.*) and judgment was He taken away;" by violence which cloaked itself under the formalities of a legal process:—really, indeed, *taken away* by God (Gen. v. 24, *s. w.*), *from* His persecutors (so Jer., Vitr., J. H. Mich., Pusey); yet, to all appearance, carried off (lii. 5) by the enemy.

and who...] Rather, "and His life who will **consider**?" Who will care to bestow serious thought on a career so prematurely cut-short?—The word for "life" occurs with a pronominal suffix *only* in one other place, ch. xxxviii. 12 ("mine age," or, life-period): and there, as here, it stands in close relation to being cut off from "the land of the living" (xxxviii. 10—12; cp. Jer. xi. 19). The verb rendered, "consider," occurs elsewhere (in this form) *only* in Ps. cxliii. 5 (A. V., "muse upon").

cut off] *s. w. a.* Ps. lxxxviii. 5; Lam. iii. 54; Ezek. xxxvii. 11.

of my people] So that here, as in *v.* 11, the speaker is God.

was he stricken] Lit. (marg.), "was the stroke upon Him" (the pronoun singular, as in xliv. 15; cp. 17; Gen. ix. 26, 27). The noun comes from the verb rendered "stricken" in *v.* 4: *They* had thought Him suffering under God's stroke. He was so; but it was for no sin of His own: it was because of their transgression.

9. *And he made...*] Rather, *And* **one appointed** *His grave with* **wicked men,** *and with* **a rich man at** *His death.* An enigma, which only history could explain. The same person, who condemned Jesus to be crucified with the malefactors, and therefore, virtually (see Josephus, 'Ant.' IV. 8), to be removed along with them, also gave permission to "a rich man" (Matt. xxvii. 57) to take the sacred body and place it in a tomb which he had destined for his own resting-place.—The word for "death" occurs elsewhere only in Ezek. xxviii. 10; where it refers to a violent death.

because (Gen. xxxi. 20) *he had done no violence*] This sudden diversion of events from their natural course was meant to be an attestation of the Sufferer's innocence.

10. **But** *the* LORD **was pleased** (xlii. 21, *s. w.*) **to crush** *Him* (*v.* 5). The unjust

bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief:
‖Or, *when his soul shall make an offering.* ‖ when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul

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deeds of men were permitted by God, that He might effect thereby His own predetermined counsel (Acts ii. 23, iii. 18). In infinite benevolence to man, He "laid sickness" (the effect of sin, xxxiii. 24) upon His Servant, who was working out an acceptable Atonement for sin.—In the old sacrifices He had *no pleasure* (Ps. xl. 6, *s. w.*), except so far as they foreshadowed this one all-perfect offering. But the self-sacrifice of the Righteous Servant was wholly in accord with the "good pleasure" of the divine "will." (Cp. Eph. i. 7—9.)

The prophet now turns to address Him, of whose mysterious Will he had spoken. *When Thou* **makest** *His soul an offering for sin;*—Hebr. *asham;* "a guilt-offering" (A. V. "trespass-offering"); Lev. v. 15, 19. The "soul" of the Lord's Servant is not the offerer (as in marg.), but the *victim;* as is plain from *v.* 12, "He poured out *His soul* unto death." It does not *present*, but itself *is*, the satisfaction:—as we read; "The Son of Man came...to give *His soul* a ransom for many;" Matt. xx. 28; cp. xxvi. 38; John xii. 27.

The leper had to bring an *asham* at his cleansing (Lev. xiv. 12, 21); probably, as a *compensation* (which is the specific idea of the *asham*) for the injury done to the holiness of God by his uncleanness. For the world's cleansing only the immaculate soul of the Righteous One could suffice! He who was looked upon as "stricken," was making satisfaction for a race that was "stricken."

Obs. In Lev. v. 1, it is said of the person who omitted to bring the *asham*, "He shall *bear his iniquity.*"

he shall see his seed] (Cp. Ps. xxii. 30.) He who had died, and been buried,—seemingly consigned to oblivion (*vv.* 8, 9)—shall *see* a long line of descendants. Clearly, then, He must have risen from the dead.

he shall prolong his days] Cp. Rev. i. 18; Heb. vii. 16, 25.

the pleasure of the LORD (xliv. 28) *shall prosper* (Ps. xlv. 4) *in his hand*] Or, through Him; by His agency.

11. *He shall see* (*v.* 10) *of the travail of his soul*]—the fruit that *comes forth from* His toil and agony. Others: "Because of the travail of His soul He shall see, and be satisfied" (so Del., &c.). Vulg. "pro eo quod laboravit anima ejus."

by his knowledge] by His intimate knowledge of the divine counsel (so Del., comparing xi. 2, l. 4; Mal. ii. 7; Matt. xi. 27). Many moderns, "through the knowledge of Him." (Cp. Phil. iii. 8, 10; Eph. i. 17; 2 Pet. ii. 20; cp. Jer. xxiv. 7.)—The rendering of A. V. is philologically to be preferred; and, if understood in accordance with Prov. xxii. 17, "Apply thine heart to *my knowledge*," really includes the other meaning. The "treasures of...knowledge," which exist in Christ (Col. ii. 3), are unveiled in the Gospel; that "in His light men may see light."

shall my righteous servant...] The adjective is emphatic:—*in virtue of* His *being* righteous (cp. Rom. v. 18, 19; 1 John ii. 1, 2), He shall make **the many** (Rom. v. 15 ff.) righteous: or (as the unusual construction implies), *impart* righteousness to them;—an expression wide enough (as Del. observes) to include all that is involved in the "bringing in of everlasting righteousness" (in Dan. ix. 24); *justitiam fidei et vitæ.*—The Vulg. well: "justificabit Ipse justus Servus meus multos."

Obs. In xlv. 24, 25, it is elaborately asserted that *only in the Lord* shall regenerate Israel "be justified." Cp. liv. 17.

and *their iniquities He* **Himself** *will* **carry** (*v.* 4, *s. w.*);—taking from off them the burden, beneath whose weight they were overwhelmed (Jerome).

12. *Therefore...the strong*] Or, "Therefore will I give Him **the many** (*v.* 11) for His portion [cp. for the construction, Job xxxix. 17], and with (Prov. xvi. 19) **mighty ones** (Ps. cxxxv. 10) shall He portion out spoil."—He who had been classed "*with* wicked men" (*v.* 9), and "numbered *with* transgressors," shall now be a conqueror, surrounded by mighty ones who share His triumph.—The Vulg. "dispertiam ei plurimos, et fortium dividet spolia;" and similarly LXX., Targ., Luther, Vitr., Havernick, Hengst., &c. The rendering of A. V. is supported by Calv., Gesen., Del., &c. Each, however, presents difficulties, which are almost, if not quite, avoided by translating as above.

because] A strong expression, implying that His exaltation was *in reward* of His self-devotion:—**because that** (Vulg. "pro eo quod") *He poured out* (as if emptying, Gen. xxiv. 20, *s. w.*) *His soul unto death, and was numbered with transgressors.*

unto death: and he was [i] numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and [k] made intercession for the transgressors.

[i] Mark 15. 28. Luke 22. 37.

[k] Luke 23. 34.

and he bare] Or, *and He* **Himself** *bare.*

the sin of many] taking it upon Him, and carrying it away (*s. w. a.* Lev. xvi. 22; cp. John i. 29),

and made (**will make**) *intercession for the transgressors*] — continuing for ever (Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 37) the work which He began on the cross (Luke xxiii. 34).—The clause, "He bare, &c." is rendered in LXX. *αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκε:* the words used in Heb. ix. 28.

NOTE A.

On the Interpretations of Chap. liii.

I. The earlier Jewish authorities understood it to refer to Messiah.

1. The Targum of Jonathan (about the beginning of the third century), while evacuating a large part of ch. liii of its true meaning, yet admits that the Servant of the Lord in lii. 13 is Messiah; that "He was delivered over on account of our iniquities;" that "it will please the Lord to remit the sins of all of us for His sake;" that "He gave up His soul unto death;" and that "for His sake the transgressors shall have forgiveness."

2. The *Synagogal Prayers* give the same reference. A metrical prayer used annually at the Passover (see Dr A. Wünsche, 'Die Leiden des Messias,' s. 49) pleads thus: "Make speed, my Beloved, until the end of the vision dawn; hasten, and the shadows shall flee from hence. High and lifted up and exalted shall He be, that is despised. He shall deal prudently, and shall reprove, and shall sprinkle many." Another (ib. s. 106) says: "Messiah, our righteousness, hath turned away from us: we are terrified, and there is none who can justify us. Our iniquities and the yoke of our transgressions He beareth; and was Himself pierced because of our transgressions. He carrieth our sins on His shoulder to find forgiveness for our iniquities, &c."

3. The Talmud, Midrashim, and other old Rabbinical books contain clear evidence of the antiquity of the Messianic application. So in 'Sifrey devey Rav,' of the third century (Wünsche, ss. 65, 66); 'Bereshith Rabba,' of the fourth century (ib. s. 69); the Midrash on Ruth (ib. s. 72); the Talmudic treatise 'Sanhedrin' (ib. pp. 62, 63; "But the Rabbins say, 'The Leper of the House of My Lord' is Messiah's name; as it is written, 'Truly, our pains did He bear; and our sicknesses, He carried them; but we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted'"); and the book 'Zohar' (ib. s. 96, 100).

Among numerous Rabbinical legends, which shew how wide-spread was the conviction, that the subject of Isai. liii is Messiah, one of the most remarkable is as follows:—(it exists in various forms; see Dr Wünsche, ss. 77—81.

"Before the world was made," it says, "the Holy One had respect to the age of Messiah, and created for Him a light, which He placed under the throne of His glory. Then He began to make a covenant with Messiah, and said to Him: O Messiah, My righteousness! The sins of those who are reserved with Thee [souls yet unborn] will bring Thee under a yoke of iron, and will make Thee like this calf, whose eyes are dim, and will choke Thy breath with unrighteousness, and through their iniquities 'Thy tongue will cleave to Thy gums' [Ps. xxii. 15]..If Thou take this upon Thee, well. If Thy soul be grieved, I will now expel them.—Messiah answered: Lord of the world, with joy and gladness of heart do I take it upon me... So *Messiah took all chastisements upon Himself out of love;* as it is said, '*He was oppressed;* &c.'"

4. That this was the view of the older Rabbins generally is stated by Rashi (Wünsche, s. 94), and by Abarbanel (ib. s. 43). Gesenius (on Isai. liii) observes: "Their later writers abandoned this explanation unquestionably on account of its bearing on the Christian controversy."

II. The views of later writers fall into two divisions: those which make the sufferer to be *an individual;* and those which make him to be the Jewish nation, or some portion of it.

1. To the first class belongs R. Saadia Gaon; who made the chapter a prophecy of Jeremiah. In this he stood almost alone, till his view was revived hesitatingly by Grotius, and again, after another interval, by Bunsen. —Abarbanel, who referred it to Josiah, seems to have had no followers. — Neither of these suppositions requires to be refuted. It is sufficient to say that, while both Jeremiah and Josiah were, in their degree, types of "the Man of Sorrows," the prophecy at large finds no reflexion in the history of either.

2. Under the second class come those who make Israel collectively, or the godly portion of it, or the prophetic order, to be the subject of the chapter.

That it could not be the nation at large appears from the fact, that the calamities,

which Israel suffered, are always spoken of as sent upon them for their own sins. (Isai. i. 4, 5; Jer. xvii. 1—4; Dan. ix. 16.) Of that last generation, in particular, which witnessed the burning of the second temple, their own historian testifies that none more ungodly had existed from the beginning of human history (Josephus, 'J. W.' v. 10, 15).

Neither could it be their prophets or righteous men, who made expiation for the nation's guilt. For

(*a*) Such a notion is opposed to the whole tenor of Scripture. "No man may redeem a brother" (Ps. xlix. 7, 8). "Thy first father hath sinned," is the position laid down in xliii. 27, to enforce what had been previously said (*v.* 25), that God forgave sins "for His own sake." (Cp. xlv. 25.)

(*b*) When Daniel, the "man greatly beloved," offered up supplication (ix. 7 f.), his plea was: "Righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces...We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies."

(*c*) Many parts of the chapter are manifestly such as cannot be applied to either the nation or any body of men inside it. The nation collectively was not "cut off from the land of the living." The prophets collectively had not their grave appointed with the wicked. The godly portion was never collectively "numbered with transgressors."

There is one further objection both to these and to all other later interpretations of the chapter. Neither of any individual nor of any body of men can it be said that, after being "cut off" and dying a violent death, "he saw his seed and prolonged his days." All attempts to find any solution other than the historical one supplied in the Gospels, are but instances of the blindness over which the prophet lamented in *v.* 1; "Who hath believed our message?"

CHAPTER LIV.

1 *The prophet, for the comfort of the Gentiles, prophesieth the amplitude of their church,* 4 *their safety,* 6 *their certain deliverance out of affliction,* 11 *their fair edification,* 15 *and their sure preservation.*

[a] Gal. 4. 27.

[a] SING, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

3 For thou shalt break forth on

CHAP. LIV. In ch. i. 4, Israel had been spoken of as "a seed of evil-doers." Well, therefore, might the Church lament (as in xxvi. 18) her spiritual barrenness. Her children had passed away, as a breath; and had "wrought no salvation in the earth." Now that reproach shall cease. A child has been born (ix. 6) who is a "Holy Seed" (vi. 13) inside carnal Israel; who has wrought out a perfect redemption, not for Israel only, but for "all flesh" (xl. 5); so that "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God" (lii. 10). His perfect obedience, as Servant, has been rewarded by the promise of a numerous seed (liii. 10), who shall partake of His righteousness (ib. 11); and be, like Him, "servants of the Lord" (liv. 17. Cp. Note at end of ch. xli). Now, therefore, the Church shall fulfil her vocation, and her "seed inherit the nations" (liv. 3).

1. *O barren,...that...*] Cp. the description of Sarah in Gen. xi. 30; observing that Isai. liv. 1—10 is the Haftarah assigned to Gen. vi. 9—xi. 32. Sarah was barren, until the child of promise came.

travail] Cp. Micah iv. 10; ch. lxvi. 7, 8.

the desolate...the married] *s. ww. a.* lxii. 4. While Jerusalem had the visible tokens of God's covenanted presence, she was like a wedded wife (cp. Jer. xxxi. 32, *s. w.*); yet she was spiritually barren. After the earthly temple (and along with it the legal dispensation that "gendered to bondage" (Gal. iv. 24) had been overthrown, she became the parent of a numerous progeny (the "many righteous" of liii. 11; see also *vv.* 13, 17, below). Compare xlix. 19—21.

2. So large a family requires that she should rebuild her tent (xxxiii. 20; Amos ix. 11; Jer. x. 20) on a far larger scale.

spare not]—have large thoughts about the grandeur of the spiritual temple, in which God will dwell (2 Cor. vi. 13, 16);—the catholic Church (1 Tim. iii. 15).

3. *shalt break forth...*] Fulfilling, at last, the promise given to Jacob at Beth-el (Gen. xxviii. 14, *s. w.*). *Thy seed*—O redeemed Jerusalem, which art above and art free, "the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26)—*shall inherit* **nations**; being the true heirs of the promise made to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 17, 18; Gal. iii. 26—29); *and shall make the desolate cities* —not those of Israel only, but cities laid waste by sin, cities over which the gloom of spiritual

the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

5 For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the [b] LORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

[b] Luke 1. 32.

6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

9 For this *is as* the waters of [c] Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

[c] Gen. 9. 11.

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

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death (Eph. ii. 1) is spread—*to be inhabited*, and peopled with living men (Rom. vi. 13).

4. *the shame of thy youth*] the act of apostasy which followed so soon after her espousal (Jer. ii. 2, iii. 24, 25; Ezek. xvi. 60), even before the Ark of the Covenant had been made, on which the Shekinah dwelt. *The reproach of thy widowhood*, caused by the withdrawal of the Shekinah of glory. (Cp. Lam. i. 1, ii. 6.)

5. Forget that mournful past: for *thy Husband*, who betroths thee to Himself, is none other than *thy Maker*. (Each noun is in the plural, as if to guard the majesty of the reference to ELOHIM.) His omnipotence will provide that amidst the brightness of the new covenant no room shall be left for remembering the "weakness and unprofitableness" of the old (Heb. vii. 18; Jer. xxxi. 34). *And thy Redeemer* **is** (none other than) *the Holy One of Israel;* who cannot but be faithful to His promise.

The God of the whole earth] So He claimed to be of old (see on vi. 3); and now He is about to make the claim good; filling "*the whole earth* with His glory." (Cp. Micah iv. 13.)

6. *hath called thee*] with the voice of authority; to re-instate thee.—This call was addressed to her, when she was *as a woman forsaken* (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 7, vi. 12, lxii. 4) *and grieved in spirit*,—because of the disesteem she laboured under (cp. 1 S. i. 10—16).

when thou...] *when* **she is cast off** (*s. w. a.* xli. 9; Lev. xxvi. 44; Jer. xxxi. 37).

7, 8. *For a small moment*] Cp. xxvi. 20 (2 Cor. iv. 17). *In a little wrath;* lit. "in an outburst of wrath;" one swift surging up of indignation; as brief, as swift. (Vulg. "in momento indignationis.") *I hid my face;* —in Ps. xxx. 5—7, as here, connected with a "moment" of anger. *Have mercy:* or, **compassion** (and so in *v.* 10); see on xiv. 1.

9. *For this* (outpouring of judgment) **is unto Me** (*as*) *the waters of Noah;* such is its intent in My divine counsel;—**because** ...*earth:* **even so**...(construction as in lv. 9; Jer. iii. 20). When the deluge had washed away the impurities of the old world, the earth rose out of the baptismal waters, relieved of its curse (cp. Gen. v. 29) and under the protection of "an everlasting covenant" (Gen. ix. 8—11; cp. *v.* 10, lv. 3): while Noah went forth, as from a watery grave, "the heir of righteousness" (Heb. xi. 7).—So should it be with Judah, submerged in the flood of Babylonian captivity. A remnant should witness the ratification of God's "everlasting covenant;" Heb. xiii. 20. (Cp. ch. xxiv. 18, xxvi. 20, lvii. 16.)

Several ancient versions (Targ., Symm., Syr., Vulg.) read the first clause, "As the days of Noah is this to Me;" losing the conjunction, which preserves the continuity of the address; and, instead of the emphatic repetition of the leading thought, having a mere recurrence of similar sounds.

nor rebuke thee] *s. w. a.* li. 20.

10. The Church's covenant shall endure amidst catastrophes far greater than the deluge. For at last the earth itself, with its granite mountains, shall decay (li. 6); but not so God's *kindness* (*s. w. a.* 2 S. vii. 15;

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, *and* not comforted, behold, [d] I will lay thy stones with [d] fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13 And all thy children *shall be* [e] taught of the LORD; and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, *but* not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

17 ¶ No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

[d] 1 Chron. 29. 2.

[e] John 6. 45.

Ps. lxxxix. 2, 28, 33; A. V. "mercy," "loving-kindness") to His redeemed.

the covenant of my peace] Or, "My covenant of peace;" Ezek. xxxiv. 25, xxxvii. 26; (cp. Num. xxv. 12; Mal. ii. 5:)—the covenant established by the "God of peace" (Heb. xiii. 20) through His Servant (liii. 5).

11. *tossed with tempest*]—as fiercely as that ark, when "the windows from on high were opened" (xxiv. 18). But, *behold!* the black, storm-tossed, Ark is transformed into a Palace of Light.

will lay] Lit. "will make to recline;" nowhere used except of living creatures (see Ps. xxiii. 2; Jer. xxxiii. 12, &c.). That palace-temple is built of "living stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5).

with fair colours] *s. w. a.* 1 Chro. xxix. 2 (A. V., "*glistering* [stones]"): probably, stones used for mosaic work (so Targ. here); as black marble, &c. In the other two places where the word occurs (2 K. ix. 30; Jer. iv. 30), it denotes the paint, which was used by females for colouring the edges of the eyelids.—Grotius notices (from Jos. 'J. W.' v. 5) that the open court of the temple had a tesselated floor.

and lay thy foundations with] Or, **make thy foundations of.**—*Sapphires;* whose transparent blue is compared with the azure seen "under the feet" of the divine glory at Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 10; cp. Ezek. i. 26).

12. *thy windows*] Or (as LXX., Vulg., and most moderns), "thy battlements," or, "pinnacles;"—which shone like little "suns" (the primitive meaning of the word). *Agates;* or, **rubies.** (LXX. and Vulg. "jasper.")

13. *taught of the* LORD] His willing *disciples:*—see on viii. 16; and cp. Jer. xxxi. 34; John xiv. 26; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 John ii. 27.

14. *In righteousness...*] Cp. ix. 7, xvi. 5, xxxii. 16. When her people are "all righteous," neither fraud nor violence can hurt her (lx. 18, 21, xxxiii. 15, 16).

thou shalt be far] Lit. "be thou far." It is commonly taken as the divine benediction,—the strongest form of promise. Yet the general usage of the word is in favour of understanding it to be an exhortation. (LXX. ἀπέχου: Vulg. "recede.") The meaning would then be: "keep thee far (Exod. xxiii. 7) from oppression,...from terror,"—that is, from all thought of these happening unto thee; "for thou hast nothing to fear; and what appears so terrible shall not come near thee." (So Knob., Del.)

Obs. In John xiv. 26, 27 the promise of *divine teaching* and of *peace* is followed by the exhortation; "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

15. *they shall surely gather...*] Or, "they shall raise a quarrel, but it is not from Me;" I have given them no commission;—"whoso raiseth a quarrel with thee, against thee shall he fall," and be laid prostrate (cp. viii. 15, xxviii. 13). Others: "shall fall unto thee:" but see Note A.

16. *the coals in the fire*] Rather, **the fire of coals**;—in his melting furnace, Ezek. xxii. 20, 21.

an instrument...] Rather, **a weapon** (*v.* 17) **according to his craft**; *and I...the* **destroyer** (*s. w. a.* xxxvi. 10) **to lay waste.** Both the armourer who forges the weapon and the ruthless conqueror who wields it were created by God. How easily can He, then, control both!—The verb rendered, **lay waste**, is the one used in xiii. 5. The corresponding verb in Arabic is the root of *al-khabil*, "the devastator;" a name given to Satan (Gesen. 'Thes.,' p. 439).

17. *shalt condemn*] Or, "convict;" proving them guilty of falsehood.

the heritage of the servants of the LORD] won for them by the one "Righteous Servant" (liii. 11); whose "voice they obey" (l. 10).

their righteousness is **from** *me*]—and, therefore, is genuine and proof against all attacks. So (remarks Mr Birks) the "accuser of the brethren" is overcome (Rev. xii. 10, 11).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 15.)

Since the phrase נפל על, followed by a person, signifies "joining one's self to" such person, many have adopted that sense here. But in reality the phrase *does not occur here.* The preposition precedes the verb; and this transposition gives a totally different aspect to both the words.—An analogous case occurs in lvii. 4. For, התענג על in all other cases (lviii. 4; Ps. xxxvii. 4; Job xxii. 26, xxvii. 10) means, "to find delight in;" but in lvii. 4, where על precedes the verb, the meaning is, "to disport against."

CHAPTER LV.

1 *The prophet, with the promises of Christ, calleth to faith,* 6 *and to repentance.* 8 *The happy success of them that believe.*

[a] John 7 37. HO, [a] every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

[†] Heb. *weigh.* 2 Wherefore do ye [†] spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the [b] sure mercies of David. [b] Acts 13. 34.

4 Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

CHAP. LV. In liv. 10 an unchangeable "Covenant of Peace" was promised. Now all who will are invited to share the benefits of the Covenant (*v.* 3).

1. *that thirsteth*] (xliv. 3)—for the righteousness spoken of in liv. 17. (Matt. v. 6; Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17; cp. on ch. xii. 3.)

that hath no money]—and confesses his poverty (cp. Luke i. 53).

come ye, buy] *s. w. a.* Gen. xlii. 2, 3, 5, &c. They must *come* (John vi. 35, 45), and *procure* it; though it be given away *without price* (cp. lii. 3).

2. *not bread*]—not worthy of the name: "meat that perisheth," not "living bread" (John vi. 27, 32, &c.;—the chapter in which Isai. liv. 13 is quoted).

hearken...] Then, the food spoken of is the "word of life;" cp. *v.* 3, John vi. 45, 68.

fatness]—rich dainties; *s. w. a.* Ps. xxxvi. 8, lxiii. 5.

3. *your soul shall live*] Cp. Ps. xxii. 26, 29; John vi. 51.

an everlasting covenant] liv. 10; (Heb. xiii. 20). *With you:* lit. "for you," or "unto you;" as in lxi. 8: Ezek. xxxiv. 25; Ps. lxxxix. 3;—implying that it is a *gift*, bestowed upon them by His free Love. LXX. διαθήσομαι ὑμῖν: cp. Luke xxii. 29.

the sure mercies of David]—promised to David (2 Chro. vi. 42);—guaranteed in *the everlasting Covenant*, of which David spoke in his last words as being "all his salvation and all his desire" (2 S. xxiii. 5). These "mercies" culminated in the oath that David's "seed" should "endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven" (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, 28, 29, 36; cp. 2 S. vii. 15, 16). How could this be, when Hezekiah's sons were to be captives *in* Babylon? still more; when all David's descendants must submit to the universal conqueror, Death? "Shall any deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" (Ps. lxxxix. 48.) Yes: ch. liii tells of One such. Apostles bore witness to such a One (Acts xiii. 34). Cp. on xxii. 25.—The word rendered, "sure," is *s. w. a.* 2 S. vii. 16 ("established"), and Ps. lxxxix. 28 ("shall stand fast"), 37 ("faithful").

4. *have given him*] There is no need to say, *who* HE is. It can only be He, who after dying "saw His seed" and "prolonged His days."

a witness to the **peoples**] "Bearing witness to the Truth" (John xviii. 37; 1 Tim. vi. 13); testifying of God's love to all nations (Rom. xv. 8—12); "the faithful witness" (Rev. i. 5; cp. Ps. lxxxix. 37).

a leader] *s. w. a.* 1 S. x. 1, xiii. 14; 1 K. i. 35; 1 Chro. v. 2, xxviii. 4; Dan. ix. 25. LXX. ἄρχοντα (*s. w. a.* Rev. i. 5, "*Prince* of the kings of the earth").

commander to the **peoples**]—supreme head;

5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

6 ¶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and †the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for †he will abundantly pardon.

† Heb. *the man of iniquity.*

† Heb. *he will multiply to pardon.*

8 ¶ For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the

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fountain of all authority; *Imperator.* It is the word used of God's *appointing* David to be "ruler" (or, "leader") over Israel (2 S. vi. 21; cp. vii. 7, 11). The "Son of David" is not only King of Israel, but Supreme Governor of the nations (Matt. xxviii. 18—20).

5. The Son of David is Himself then addressed; in language which looks back to Ps. xviii. 43. A nation, on whom He had not before bestowed marks of His favour, had not "known" or recognized as His own (Amos iii. 2), and who, consequently, had been ignorant of Him (Gal. iv. 9), should "run" eagerly towards Him. Cp. lxv. 1.

hath glorified thee] LXX. ἐδόξασε: the word used in Acts iii. 13, "The God of our fathers *hath glorified* His servant Jesus."—In lx. 9 the latter part of this verse is applied to the Church irradiated with the "glory of the Lord."

6. The exhortation which follows, though of universal application, had a very special bearing on Israel (Deut. iv. 29; Jer. xxix. 13, 14; Ps. cv. 4—6). The Jewish Church so accepted it, by making Isai. lv. 6—lvi. 8 the Haftarah to Deut. xxxi.

while he is near] Jer. vi. 8. Cp. Deut. iv. 7; Ps. cxlviii. 14.

7. *mercy*] **compassion**, liv. 10.

8. Let them not doubt His superabounding grace. His justice was indeed inflexible; yet even in punishing His "thoughts" aimed only at their good (Jer. xxix. 11). *Their* thoughts were full of proud self-estrangement; *His* of generous condescending *Love*. Their ways were marked by hard-heartedness and treachery; "all His ways were mercy and truth."

10. *returneth not thither, but...*] The LXX. has "until;" and so Del. But this meaning (in itself quite possible, Gen. xxxii. 26, A. V. 27; Ruth iii. 18) does not suit *v.* 11 (where the LXX. omits the word "empty"). The truth seems to be, that the word "return" has no bearing whatever on the *ultimate* re-ascent of the rain in the form of vapour; but means, "to be turned back (defeated)." Cp. xlv. 23. The rain does not descend to earth and then fly back again;—it remains here, working out God's beneficent purposes.

maketh it...bud] Cp. xlv. 8; where the parable is interpreted.

11. *my word...*] "Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" has in it vital energy (Deut. viii. 3; Heb. iv. 12). Whence, indeed, but from the creative word, comes the productive power of the *earth*, the fertilizing properties of the *rain*, the germinating power of the *seed*, the nutritive quality of the *corn*? So too must it be with His Redemptive Word (xl. 8). It shall cause "righteousness to bud" (xlv. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 10). It shall quicken and sustain the life of the soul (*v.* 2).—*It shall not return...***empty** (2 S. i. 22; cp. Jer. xiv. 3; Ruth iii. 17).

The words, *that which I please*, and, *shall prosper*, recall liii. 10, *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand;* suggesting that the final application of the parable is to Him who *came down from heaven and gave life unto the world* (John vi. 33); who said, "I came down from heaven...*to do the will of Him that sent me*" (ib. 38; cp. 39, 40; Matt. xxvi. 39). Cp. also Ps. lxxii. 6, 7.

12. *ye shall go out with* **gladness**] Out from the region of darkness (xlii. 7, xlix. 9), of pollution (lii. 11); nay (such is

(chap. 35. 1 mountains and the hills shall [c] break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

CHAPTER LVI.

1 *The prophet exhorteth to sanctification.* 3 *He promiseth it shall be general without respect of persons.* 9 *He inveigheth against blind watchmen.*

THUS saith the LORD, Keep ye [f] judgment, and do justice: for my salvation *is* near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. [f] Or, *equity.*

2 Blessed *is* the man *that* doeth this, and the son of man *that* layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

3 ¶ Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to

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the transcendently gracious "thought" of God concerning us), out from the region of death (Ezek. xxxvii. 12; John v. 29).—*Led forth;* as in a festive procession (Ps. xlv. 15, 16, *s. w.*).

The connexion of *vv.* 11, 12 implies that this *Exodus* deliverance is, eminently, the work which God has willed and which His word was sent forth to accomplish. So too in John v. 28—30.

shall clap their hands] As the people did (remarks Schmieder) at the coronation of their long-secluded prince in 2 K. xi. 12.

13. Cp. xli. 19.—*The thorn;* see on vii. 19.—*The briar* (here only. Symm. and Vulg. "the nettle"). The Targ. paraphrases: "Instead of the wicked shall rise up the righteous; and instead of transgressors men that fear sin." This is amply borne out by David's 'Last Words,' 2 S. xxiii. 6, 7.

. *it shall be*]—this regenerated creation shall be—*to the Lord for a Name;* a historical manifestation of His character, a fact to which men will refer as connoting His power and goodness (cp. lxiii. 12; 2 S. vii. 23):—*for an everlasting sign;* a pledge of the enduring firmness of His Covenant (*v.* 3).

shall not be cut off] So at the end of the first section of Part II,—xlviii. 19.

CHAPS. LVI—LIX. The central object presented to our view in xlix—lv was, the Righteous One making atonement for sin. The leading thought in the present section is, the penitence and *humiliation of soul* (lviii. 3—5) due from Israel, if they would have a share in that atonement. In ch. lix we almost hear the high-priest confessing the sins of the people.—The Haftarah for *the Day of Atonement* is lvii. 14—lviii. 14.

CHAP. LVI. On the basis of the Everlasting Covenant (liv. 10, lv. 3) both comfort and warning may be applied to the Jewish Church; to the house of David in particular. In xxxix. 7, it had been foretold that some of the royal family should be eunuchs in the palace at Babylon. Are they, then, excluded from the covenant? Not so. If they observe the *conditions* of the covenant (*vv.* 4, 6), they shall have a conspicuous place as regards its privileges;—"shall have an everlasting name which shall not be cut off," *v.* 5 (*s. w. a.* lv. 13).

1. *do justice*] **righteousness** (*s. w. a.* in second member of the *v.*).

salvation...righteousness] See on xlvi. 13. Cp. Rom. i. 16, 17: "The Gospel...is the power of God unto *salvation;* for therein is the *righteousness of God revealed*" (ἀποκαλύπτεται; *s. w. a.* in LXX. here).

2. *Blessed is the man that doeth this*] The requirement of the Old covenant (Lev. xviii. 5) is fulfilled under the New (Rom. viii. 4; James i. 22, 25). Cp. John xiii. 17: "If ye know these things, *happy are ye if ye do them.*"

the son of man] For the "salvation" is open to mankind (the "son of the stranger" included, *v.* 3).

layeth hold on] Or, "holdeth fast by" (*vv.* 4, 6). Cp. Heb. iv. 15, x. 23.

from polluting...from doing any...] Or, "so as not to pollute...so as to do no..." (2 Cor. xiii. 7). The two clauses of the second member of the verse correspond to those of the first; but (as often) in an inverse order:—the keeping of the sabbath being one chief means of "holding fast by" God's covenant of salvation. (Cp. Heb. x. 23—25.)

In the Sinaitic legislation the ordinance of the sabbath stood out prominent above all others: for (1) it was embodied in the moral law; (2) it was enforced on Moses, after he had received the details of the tabernacle worship; being the *only* precept, apart from those details, which he received during his first forty-days on Mount Sinai. It was there set forth, as "the sign between God and Israel throughout their generations," as "an everlasting covenant" (Exod. xxxi. 13, 17).—Its importance is now insisted upon by the evangelical prophet (cp. lviii. 13). The reason is evident. The sabbath was a memorial of the

the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I *am* a dry tree.

4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

7 Even them will I [a] bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *shall be* accepted upon mine altar; for [b] mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, [†] beside those that are gathered unto him.

[a] chap. 2. 2.

[b] Matth. 21. 13. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46.

[†] Heb. *to his gathered.*

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six days of *creation* (Exod. xx. 11, xxxi. 17); of the *redemption* out of Egypt (Deut. v. 15); of God's continual *sanctification* of His people (Exod. xxxi. 13): so that, by its means, they dwelt in the presence of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.—Such "sabbatism" was as far removed from the formal, heartless, superstitious observance of the sabbath censured in i. 13, as the noble fir-tree is from the thorn or the fragrant myrtle from the nettle.

3. **And let not the alien** *that hath joined himself* (xiv. 1, *s. w.*)...*say, The* LORD **will certainly sever me** *from His people.* Under the law, Israel had been "*severed* (Lev. xx. 26, *s. w.*) *from the peoples.*" The "severance-wall" was broken down by Christ (Eph. ii. 11—19); and all nations admitted to the spiritual priesthood (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9).

Obs. The character of Cornelius, the first-fruits of the Gentile world, corresponded to the description in *v.* 1: he "feared God and wrought righteousness" (Acts x. 35).

a dry tree] that can bear no fruit for God's glory; being cut off from the congregation of God (Deut. xxiii. 1, 2);—a contrast of "the green olive-tree in the house of God" in Ps. lii. 8. Cp. Ezek. xvii. 24.

4. the things *that please me*] Or, *that wherein I have pleasure:*—"mercy, judgment, and righteousness;—for in these things *have I pleasure*, saith the Lord" (Jer. ix. 24, *s. w.*).

5. **I will even give** *unto them...a place*] Rather, "a memorial," or, monument (*s. w. a.* 1 S. xv. 12; see the note there): *and a name better* **than sons** (1 S. i. 8).

my walls] The walls of My Holy City (xxvi. 1, xlix. 16, lx. 18).

an everlasting name] "written in heaven" (Luke x. 20; Dan. xii. 1).—To this class belonged Daniel and his three friends (Dan. i. 3), and the Abyssinian nobleman (Acts viii. 27—39).—With what deepened interest would the last read this chapter, after he had received Philip's exposition of ch. liii!

6. *the* **aliens** *that join themselves to the* LORD *to* **minister unto** *Him.* Both the verbs occur in Num. xviii. 2.—*To love the Name ...to be His servants;* to abide in His house as servants for ever, *because* they love Him. (See Exod. xxi. 5, 6.)

7. *Even them...*] *I will* **even bring** *them.*

my holy mountain] xi. 9, lvii. 13; Joel iii. 17. (Cp. on ii. 2, 3.)

my house of prayer] This was what the Jewish temple should have been (1 K. viii. 30, 38, 42); what the "Church of the living God" is (1 Tim. ii. 1, iii. 15).

their burnt offerings...] As seven centuries had yet to elapse before the Levitical dispensation would terminate, its language is still retained (cp. lx. 7). But the emphatic repetition of the name, *House of Prayer*, seems to anticipate the time when, instead of material sacrifices, there should be offered up in God's temple "supplications, prayers, intercessions, givings of thanks" (1 Tim. ii. 1).

for all people] *for all* **the peoples** (1 K. viii. 43, *s. w.*).—This text was quoted by our Lord in the temple, when he was preparing to offer the "one sacrifice for sins" (Heb. x. 12) on behalf of mankind.—Those whom He drove out of the temple correspond to the description in *v.* 11 below; "looking *every one to his gain.*" Cp. on *v.* 9.

8. *The Lord* JEHOVAH (li. 4), *which gathereth* (xi. 12, liv. 7) *the outcasts of Israel* (xxvii. 13), *saith,* **Yet others** *will I gather unto him beside* **his own that are gathered**; the "other sheep," of John x. 16 (xi. 52).

9 ¶ All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, *yea*, all ye beasts in the forest.

10 His watchmen *are* blind: they are all ignorant, they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; ‖ sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

11 Yea, *they are* †greedy dogs *which* †can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

12 Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, *and* much more abundant.

‖ Or, *dreaming, or, talking in their sleep.* † Heb. *strong of appetite.* † Heb. *know not to be satisfied.*

CHAPTER LVII.

1 *The blessed death of the righteous.* 3 *God reproveth the Jews for their whorish idolatry.* 13 *He giveth evangelical promises to the penitent.*

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth *it* to heart: and † [a]merciful men *are* taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away ‖ from the evil *to come*.

† Heb. *men of kindness, or, godliness.* [a] Psal. 12. 1. Micah 7. 2. ‖ Or, *from that which is evil.*

9—12. From that bright prospect the prophet's eye turns back to the existing state of things. In the last reign, instead of the temple's being thrown open for "all the peoples," it had been entirely closed (2 Chro. xxviii. 24). Now, under Hezekiah, there was an outward improvement; but as soon as he should be removed (cp. lvii. 2), the old evil, national infidelity, would break out more fiercely than ever. Then *the beasts of the field* (Jer. xii. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 5; ch. xliii. 20) would be summoned to the work of devastation.

9. *come to devour, yea, all ye...*] The accents require us to render, *O all ye beasts of the field! come ye to devour every beast in the forest.* So A. Ezra and Rashi. This is in accordance with Jer. xii. 8, 9 (cp. on ch. xxix, Note A); where God's inheritance is described as having become like a "lion *in the forest*," and *all the beasts of the field* are summoned *to devour*.—Ariel, "God's Lion" (xxix. 1), which should have been the Royal City of the world (cp. Exod. xix. 6), had become God's enemy; and therefore was to be given over as a prey to the kingdoms of the earth. (Cp. Dan. iv. 12, 32.)

Obs. Jer. xii. 7—11 is a resumption of vii. 11—15: and in Matt. xxi. 13 we have Jer. vii. 11 employed as the contrast of Isai. lvi. 7.

10. *His watchmen are blind*] Or (Kethiv), "Blind men are set to watch." They profess to be looking out for Messiah, and will not discern Him, when He is offered to them; cp. lii. 8; Jer. vi. 17; Matt. xv. 14.

All of them are **without knowledge** (i. 3, lix. 8); not having even intelligence enough to do the part of a sheep-dog—to give an alarm in time of danger.—*Sleeping*, or, "drowsing:" LXX. ἐνυπνιαζόμενοι (Jude 8).

11. *Yea, they are...*] More nearly: "And the dogs are of fierce appetite, they know not satiety; **even they are shepherds, yet they know not** understanding (cp. xxix. 24): they **have all turned** to their own way (liii. 6, *s.w.*), every one **to his own** gain" (*s.w.a.* lvii. 17).

from his quarter] Rather, "to the uttermost." Each one *as far as to him is possible* (Del.); or, every one *throughout the community*.

12. *Come ye*] *s. w. a.* in *v.* 9.—While the voice of judgment has gone forth, saying to the devourer, "Come hither"; they shout, "Come hither," to their fellow-revellers. (Cp. Matt. xxiv. 49.)

and much more...] Or, "a very surpassingly great (day)."

CHAP. LVII. The last years of Hezekiah must have been saddened with the thought that the period of "peace and truth" for Judah was coming to an end. Amidst the regrets which beset him, the opening words of this chapter would be a deep consolation to him. The righteous man, though prematurely (as men say) removed, "shall enter into peace." But for the nation at large there is "no peace." The prophet's message to them is (as from the first) one of stern denunciation (*vv.* 3—13) of sin, mingled with tender care for the lowly and contrite (*v.* 15). "Peace! Peace!" to the penitent (*v.* 19); eternal war to the wicked (*v.* 21).

1. *perisheth*] Or, "is perished" (Micah vii. 2); disappearing "before his time" (Eccl. vii. 15). Every such death was a loss to the nation; for it had one support less of piety, one fewer to intercede for it. Yet *none layeth it to heart*:—rather they feel relieved of one whose life was a reproof to them.

merciful men] Or, **gracious** *men*:—who, having felt the lovingkindness of God, deal kindly with their fellow-men. (Cp. Micah vii. 2, where the "good," or, "godly" man is substantially the same term.)

is taken away] Or, **gathered in** (Gen. xlix. 29; Num. xxvii. 13; 2 K. xxii. 20).

from the evil to come] Or, **out of the way of evil** (cp. Jer. xlii. 17, *s. w.*).—

2 He shall ‖ enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, *each one* walking ‖ *in* his uprightness.

3 ¶ But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore.

4 Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, *and* draw out the tongue? *are* ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,

5 Enflaming yourselves ‖ with idols [b] under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks?

6 Among the smooth *stones* of the stream *is* thy portion; they, they *are* thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

7 Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

8 Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered *thyself to another* than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and ‖ made thee *a covenant* with them; thou lovedst their bed ‖ where thou sawest *it*.

‖ Or, *go in peace.*

‖ Or, *before him.*

‖ Or, *among the oaks.*

[b] 2 Kin. 16. 4.

‖ Or, *hewed it for thyself* larger *than theirs.*

‖ Or, *thou providedst room.*

Therefore his removal is a sign that the evil is near at hand; cp. Gen. xix. 22; 2 K. xxii. 20.

2. *enter into peace*] Or, *arrive at* it;—that peace which here he had been unable to attain.

their beds] Resting from their heavy toil (Ps. cxlix. 5; Rev. xiv. 13): cp. xxvi. 20.

each one *walking*.....] Rather, **whoso walketh.** It is the character of the persons, to whom the promise applies. Such a one walketh (lit.) "straight before him;" *not* "turning to ways of his own" (lvi. 11). Cp. xxxiii. 15.

3. *of the sorceress*] (*s. w. a.* ii. 6)—of that idolatrous, soothsaying, Jerusalem. We know that the malady burst out with fresh virulence after Hezekiah's death. (Cp. 2 Chro. xxxiii. 6, *s. w.*; A. V. "observed times.")

of the adulterer] *and* **her that committed whoredom**—seduced by the wiles of the apostate into forgetting "the covenant of her God" (Prov. ii. 17); joining herself to idol-gods (Exod. xxxiv. 16), or to the *idola* of unbelief (Matt. xvi. 4). For such (as for Jezebel, 2 K. ix. 22) what possibility of "*peace*" (*vv.* 2, 21, lix. 8)?

4. *sport yourselves*]—in derisive mirth (see on ch. liv, Note A). They directed their scorn against (as they thought) a poor, frail man; but in reality it was against the "Holy One of Israel." (Cp. xxxvii. 23.)

a wide mouth] Ps. xxxv. 21: cp. Ps. xxii. 7.

a seed of falsehood] (xliv. 20, *s. w.*). Cp. John viii. 44.

5. *with idols*] So LXX., Syr., Targ., Vulg., Vitr., Stier—supported by Jer. iii. 13. Others, "among the oaks" (cp. i. 29).

slaying the children]—to Baal (Jer. xix. 5), or, to Molech (2 Chro. xxviii. 3; cp. Ezek. xvi. 21).

in the valleys (or, torrent-beds, *s. w. a.* in *v.* 6) *under the clifts*] Probably, in rocky caverns on the sides of the ravines such as are common in Palestine.

6. **In** *the smooth stones*] Probably used as fetishes. Smooth stones (named *sālagrāms*), chiefly from the river Gandaki, are treated as sacred objects by the Vaishnavas all over North India.—*In* them, not in the living God, is now *thy portion* (*s. w. a.* Jer. x. 16).

they] The senseless, pitiless, stones are thy self-chosen *lot* (*s. w. a.* Jer. xiii. 25).

Should I receive comfort in these?] Rather, *Shall I* **for all these things relent?** With such provocations before Me, shall I still shew leniency,—and not take vengeance? (Cp. Jer. v. 7, 9.)

7. *a lofty and high mountain*] Such as the idolaters resorted to (Jer. ii. 20):—here, obviously, used in an allegorical way. Instead of trusting in "the High and Lofty One" (*v.* 15, vi. 1, lii. 13), who condescended to sanctify and guard lowly Zion, Judah had placed her hopes on that mighty empire, which towered so high above the kingdoms of the earth (cp. on ii. 2, viii. 7, 8).

8. In Deut. vi. 9 (cp. xi. 20), Israel were bidden to write the great words, which summed up their fundamental creed and consequent duty, "*upon their door-posts* (*s. w.*), and their gates" (cp. also Exod. xiii. 9); that they might be reminded of their national vow, "*to love* the Lord their God" (Deut. vi. 5, xi. 13, 22). The faithless Church had removed that *memento*.—**Didst thou** *set up thy* **own** *remembrance.*

thou hast...] Or, **away from Me** (Jer. iii. 1, *s. w.*) *didst thou uncover thyself, and* **wentest up** (Gen. xlix. 4); *thou* **enlargedst** *thy bed* ("making altars in every corner of Jerusalem," 2 Chro. xxviii. 24), *and* **didst get thee a covenant from** *them*;—to secure their abiding friendship.

9 And [1]thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even* unto hell.

10 Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; *yet* saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the [1]life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

11 And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

12 I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

13 ¶ When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take *them:* but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

14 And shall say, [c]Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit,

[1] Or, *thou inspectedst the king.*

[1] Or, *living.*

[c] chap. 40. 3. & 62. 10.

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where thou sawest it] Or, *thou lookedst out* (Exod. xviii. 21, *s. w.*) *a memorial* (*s. w. a.* lvi. 5; A. V. "a place"). One such especial "memorial" was that by which Ahaz thought to perpetuate his kingdom and name, the Damascene altar (2 K. xvi. 10—15).

9. *thou wentest* (or, gavest a present) *to the king with ointment*] Using the precious oil (xxxix. 2), and perfumes (cp. the cognate word in Exod. xxx. 25), which were meant for God's service, as presents (cp. the noun in 1 S. ix. 7) to the Assyrian king, or in the worship of his god. (Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 41.)

Even to Hades: — falling down in abject terror, and allowing, nay, inviting, the power of darkness to trample upon thee.

10. *wearied* (xlvii. 12) *in the greatness of thy way*] With the long journey (Josh. ix. 13, *s. w.*) she had imposed on herself. Yet, in her frenzy, she will not confess her disappointment, or say—

There is no hope] (*s. w. a.* Jer. ii. 25).

found the life of thine hand] As Ephraim, Hos. xii. 8 (9), when he "found him out wealth," encouraged himself in impenitence; so Judah, when she obtained any short return of earthly prosperity—of fresh *life* and energy to her enfeebled *hand*—forgat the things in which alone is "the life of man's spirit" (xxxviii. 16).

thou wast not grieved] Or, **didst not grieve** (Jer. v. 3, *s. w.*).

11. The root of their apostasy was their forgetting God and fearing man. (Cp. li. 12, 13; Jer. v. 22.)

that thou **liest**] — and dealest untruly, breaking thy plighted troth (xxx. 9; Ps. lxxviii. 36; *s. w.* Cp. ch. lviii. 11; Ps. xliv. 17).

have not I...] They misconstrued God's forbearance; inferring from it that He took no part in human affairs; whereas His long-continued self-restraint ought to have drawn them to Him in reverent awe.

12. *I* **myself** *will declare thy righteousness*] shewing what its true character is, how hollow and empty;—*and thy works,* **which** *shall not profit thee* (*s. w. a.* xlviii. 17); for they are "works of iniquity" (lix. 6).

13. *thy companies*] Rather, **the things thou hast gathered**;—whether piles of gods (cp. Micah i. 7), or heaps of wealth (Prov. xiii. 11, xxviii. 8), or accumulation of fancied merits.—*Let* them *deliver thee* (Deut. xxxii. 38; Judg. x. 14; Jer. ii. 28).

possess the land] Cp. lx. 21; Ps. xxxvii. 9.

14. *And shall say*] Rather, put a full stop at the end of *v.* 13, and render, "*And* **He** *shall say;*"—the prophet interposing the remark. Others, "And it shall be said."—The following words are God's (who says, "My people," xl. 1).

Cast ye up] namely (lxii. 10), "a highway;"—by which men may travel to the "holy mountain" (*v.* 13). Cp. xxxv. 8.

take up] *s. w. a.* lxii. 10, "lift up." Here it is, "lift up the *stumblingblock;*" there, "lift up the *standard.*" *Lift up* the cross which has been so long a cause of stumbling (1 Cor. i. 23) that it may become a glorious ensign (Gal. vi. 14).

15. *high and lofty*] *s. ww. a.* vi. 1.

that **dwelleth in** *eternity*] The same verb as in the next clause, and in xxxiii. 5. LXX. κατοικῶν τὸν αἰῶνα.

is Holy] Or; "*is,* HOLY ONE" (vi. 3). LXX. Ἅγιος ἐν ἁγίοις, ὄνομα αὐτῷ.

the high and holy place]—the "unapproachable Light" of 1 Tim. vi. 16 (Del.).

with him also] The construction as in Lev.

to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls *which* I have made.

17 For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on [f] frowardly in the way of his heart.

[f] Heb. *turning away.*

18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.

19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to *him that is* far off, and to *him that is* near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

20 But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 [d] *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. [d] chap. 48. 22.

CHAPTER LVIII.

1 *The prophet, being sent to reprove hypocrisy,* 3 *expresseth a counterfeit fast and a true.* 8 *He declareth what promises are due unto godliness,* 13 *and to the keeping of the sabbath.*

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xvi. 16; "the tent of meeting, which *dwelleth with them* in the midst of their uncleanness."

Obs. Lev. xvi is the Parashah for the Day of Atonement; the Haftarah beginning at ch. lvii. 14.

contrite] The adj. is derived from the verb used in liii. 5, 10 ("bruise," or, "crush").

to revive] Or, quicken to new life (Ps. cxix. 25).

16. This revival of spiritual life is the end of God's apparently severe dealings with men. He *will not contend for ever*;—as on the ground of justice (*s. w. a.* l. 8). If He were to do that, the *spirit*, which He breathed into man, would *fail* (or faint away) **from before** *Him*. But this was not His purpose respecting the *souls* He *made*:—He had provided a way of reconciliation (liii. 5). Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 38, 39.

17. *his covetousness*] *s. w. a.* lvi. 11 ("gain"); Jer. vi. 13. Out of that sin, which is, in essence, idolatry (Col. iii. 5), every form of *iniquity* might germinate (1 Tim. vi. 10).

and smote him] The form denotes *repeated* action.

I hid (my face, viii. 17), *and was wroth*] Such displeasure being an evidence of love. (Compare Hos. v. 15.)

frowardly] Or, "backsliding:"—moving further away from God (*s. w. a.* Jer. iii. 14, 22; cp. viii. 5).

in the way of his heart]—of his besotted heart (vi. 10, xxix. 13, lxiii. 17). Cp. lxv. 2.

18. God had hid away His face behind a cloud of wrath: yet the all-seeing Eye followed the wanderer along his devious *ways*;—marking every sign of growing weakness, every halting step, every bitter self-reproach, and at last his self-despair. (Cp. Jer. xxxi. 18—20.)

will heal him] Cp. vi. 10, liii. 5; Jer. iii. 22; Hos. xiv. 4.

and restore comforts] Lit. "will recompense (or, pay back) consolations:" as though giving them a requital for the suffering, to which (in very love) He had subjected them.

to his mourners] to those of Israel, who mourn with contrite sorrow (cp. lxi. 2, 3). Both the language and the idea are different in lxvi. 10.

19. *I create*] Or, "He createth;"—the first clause being an outburst of admiration from the prophet. Only God's creative word could enable the barren heart to bring forth the *fruit of the lips*; grateful praise. Cp. Hos. xiv. 2; Heb. xiii. 15. The word of creative power follows:—

Peace, peace] (xxvi. 3). In vain had Israel's false comforters pronounced that benediction (Jer. vi. 14).

to him that is far off...to him that is near] Jewish interpreters take this to refer to Israel, in Canaan or scattered over all lands (cp. Dan. ix. 7; Acts ii. 39). It is, at the same time, applicable to the Jew and the Gentile (Eph. ii. 17).

20. *But the wicked* (in contrast with the "mourners" of *v.* 18) *are like the troubled sea* [the chief division of the verse is here]: **for** (1) *it cannot rest, and* (2) *its waters cast up*, &c. So the wicked. They are (1) outwardly restless; and (2) their souls are ever ejecting ungodly and unloving thoughts.

21. This verse differs from xlviii. 22 only in having "*my God*," for, "*the Lord*." Thus the prophet seals his adhesion to the divine sentence. (Cp. vii. 13.)

CHAP. LVIII. The promise of reconciliation was made in lvii. 15—19. The present chapter stands like a *homily* for the Day of Atonement (see on *v.* 3); while the *confession*

CRY †aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

3 ¶ Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your ‖† labours.

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ‖ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it [a]such a fast that I have chosen? [b]‖a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him?* wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 *Is* not this the fast that I have

Heb. *with the throat.*

‖ Or, *things wherewith ye grieve others.* † Heb. *griefs.*

‖ Or, *ye fast not as this day.*

[a] Zech. 7. 5.

[b] Lev. 16. 29.

‖ Or, *to afflict his soul for a day?*

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of the people's sins, suited for that day, follows in ch. lix.

1. *Cry aloud*] Lit. "with (outstretched) throat." The command is addressed to the prophet, as in xl. 6. He is to "prepare the way" (lvii. 14, xl. 3) by reproving vice and formalism;—as John the Baptist also did, when he proclaimed the near approach of the great Atonement. (Luke iii. 3—17.)

spare not] (liv. 2). LXX. μὴ φείσῃ: so in 2 Cor. xiii. 2.

like a trumpet]—such as was heard when the law was proclaimed on Sinai (Exod. xix. 19). Cp. Hos. viii. 1.

and shew...sins] Nearly the same as Micah iii. 8 *b*.

my people their transgression] Cp. liii. 8.

house of Jacob]—ii. 5, 6, viii. 17, x. 20, xiv. 1, xxix. 22, xlvi. 3, xlviii. 1. (See on ii. 5.)

2. *Yet they seek me*] Cp. Ezek. xx. 1. *And take delight in the knowledge of My way* (*s. w. a.* Job xxi. 14). Cp. Mal. iii. 1 (*s. w.*).

that did] Rather, *that* **hath done.**

ask of me the ordinances of justice (Deut. xvi. 18)]—as if they were injured persons, whose rights God did not defend. Cp. Mal. ii. 17.

in approaching to God]—*in* **drawing near to** *God* (*s. w. a.* Ps. lxxiii. 28); while "their heart is far from Him" (ch. xxix. 13). LXX. ἐγγίζειν θεῷ (as in James iv. 8).

3. They observe the Day of Atonement, the only fast-day enjoined by the law; on which every Israelite was required to "*afflict* his soul" (Lev. xvi. 29, 31). But their day of soul-afflicting has not produced its proper fruits, contrition and charity. They censure God (cp. Mal. iii. 14); they oppress men.

ye find pleasure (*v.* 13)]—not humbling of soul, but self-pleasing; never more bent, than then, on having your own imperious will gratified.

your labours] Or, "grievous tasks" (Gesen.). On that one day, at least, they should have spared their bondman or their debtor: instead of which they insisted on having the full tale of labour from them; even whilst they were confessing their own need of absolutely free forgiveness from God.

Obs. 1. The sabbatical and jubile years (when servants and debtors obtained release) began on the evening of *the Day of Atonement* (Lev. xxv. 9).

Obs. 2. It is much to be noted, that kindly forbearance to the poor had the following promise attached to it;—"it shall be *righteousness* unto thee before the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxiv. 13): cp. *vv.* 2, 8.

4. They came forth from their fast-day service harder and more selfish; more bent on *strife and* **contention** (Prov. xiii. 10, *s. w.*); on *wickedness*, or tyrannical injustice (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 6; Ps. cxxv. 3).

ye shall not fast] Either a prohibition (as in the Decalogue), "I bid you not to fast so;" or a menacing admonition; "I tell you, it *shall not be.* I will put a stop to it."

to make...]—the issue of your fast being that you *make your voice to be heard on high* (cp. Ps. lxxv. 5), in loud and arrogant altercation (Judg. xviii. 25; cp. Josh. vi. 10, ch. xlii. 10). LXX. ἐν κραυγῇ.—In xlii. 2, 3, "making the voice to be heard on high" is in contrast with gentleness to those who were "bruised" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 6, "oppressed").

5. *Is it such...his soul*] Rather, **Shall such be the** *fast that I* **will choose, the day when man afflicteth** *his soul?* Can it be supposed that My ordinance of a day for the special humiliation of man's proud soul meant no more than this?

as a bulrush]—with a merely physical inclination of the head, that had no inward virtue.

an acceptable day] Lit. "a day of acceptance" (cp. xlix. 8, lxi. 2);—of grace and propitiation (*s. w. a.* lvi. 7, lx. 10).

chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo † the heavy burdens, and to let the † oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

† Heb. *the bundles of the yoke.* † Heb. *broken.*

7 *Is it* not [c] to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are ‖ cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

[c] Ezek. 18. 7.

‖ Or, *afflicted.*

8 ¶ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD † shall be thy rereward.

† Heb. *shall gather thee up.*

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

10 And *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noon day:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in † drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters † fail not.

† Heb. *droughts.*

† Heb. *lie,* or, *deceive.*

12 And *they that shall be* of thee [d] shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

[d] chap. 61. 4.

13 ¶ If thou turn away thy foot

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6. *have chosen*]—**will choose** (*v.* 5).

bands of wickedness]—thrown around any by injustice and tyranny (*v.* 4).

the heavy burdens] Lit. *the* **thongs of the yoke**: the straps by which a yoke for carrying burdens (cp. ix. 4) was fastened across the shoulders. The LXX. paraphrases; "the knots (or, intricacies) of forced contracts:" while the Targ. refers it to unjust judicial decisions.

to let the oppressed go free]—to manumit (Exod. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12) those who had been "bruised" (*s. w. a.* xlii. 3; 1 S. xii. 3, 4), by misfortune or debt; and so had been compelled to become servants.—The law of manumission was to be a perpetual witness that the people were God's freemen (Lev. xxvi. 13; Deut. xv. 15). To violate this law was virtually to assail all the duties of the Second Table; as, on the other hand, profanation of the sabbath (cp. *v.* 13) set at nought the whole of the First Table.

The Septuagintal rendering of this clause is inserted by St Luke (iv. 18) in his quotation of Isai. lxi. 1, 2 ("to set at liberty them that are bruised"). See on lxi. 1.

7. *to deal*] *s. w. a.* Lam. iv. 4 ("breaketh"). Cp. Job xxxi. 17.—Delitzsch notices that in the primitive Church fasting was always accompanied by almsgiving. (See Dr Th. Jackson, 'Wks.' x. p. 587.)

cast out] Or, "homeless:" LXX. ἀστέγους. Cp. the noun in Lam. i. 7, iii. 19.

hide not thyself] *s. w. a.* Deut. xxii. 1, 3, 4.

thine own flesh] Cp. Neh. v. 5.

With *vv.* 6, 7, compare Matt. xxv. 35, 36.

8. *thy light*...] An anticipation of lx. 1.

break forth] Or, "burst forth," as from a fountain,—the "Fount of Light" (Ps. xxxvi. 6). The light of God's love would shine on them, if they walked in love to their brethren (Ps. cxii. 4; 1 John ii. 8—11).

thine health] Or, "healing;" *s. w. a.* Jer. xxxiii. 6; 2 Chro. xxiv. 13.

thy righteousness shall go before thee] (Cp. Ps. lxxxv. 13.) In lii. 12 it is, "*The Lord* shall go before thee." It was through Him that they attained righteousness (xlv. 24).

9. *shall answer*]—shall answer thy *call*, or challenge; and satisfy thy doubts respecting the equity of His dealings (Job ix. 16). Or, shall answer thy cry for deliverance, Ps. xviii. 41, &c.

If thou...] In the very act of comforting God's people, the prophet breaks off his discourse, in order that he may once more impress on them the importance of justice and brotherly love as a *condition* of God's pardoning grace.

putting forth...] Contemptuously.

vanity] Rather, "unrighteousness."

10. *draw out thy soul*]—draw it out of its narrow self-love, that it may go along with the dole which passes from thy hand.

11. *make fat*] So LXX. and Kimchi (cpg. Prov. xv. 30). The Syr. (and so Knob., Del.), "shall strengthen."

fail not] Or, "disappoint not;" cp. Jer. xv. 18.

12. *they that shall be of thee*]—that belong to thee, and go forth from thee.

foundations of many generations] Probably (see xliv. 26, lxi. 4) foundations, which for

from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause
[e] Deut. 32. 13. thee to [e] ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

CHAPTER LIX.

1 *The damnable nature of sin.* 3 *The sins of the Jews.* 9 *Calamity is for sin.* 16 *Salvation is only of God.* 20 *The covenant of the Redeemer.*

BEHOLD, the LORD's hand is not [a] shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:
[a] Numb. 11. 23. chap. 50. 2.

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many generations had lain ruined and desolate. (So Vitr., Del.)

of paths to dwell in]—the "old paths" (Jer. vi. 16), which had been long deserted, or even forgotten. Along those paths cities of secure habitation might be built.

13. As in one place the non-manumission of servants (Jer. xxxiv. 12—22), so, in another, the desecration of the sabbath (Jer. xvii. 12—27; Ezek. xxii. 8, 26), is spoken of as a principal reason why Jerusalem was given up to the Chaldeans. Cp. on *v.* 6.

from the sabbath] The sabbath is spoken of as *hallowed ground*, from which the busy foot is to be kept back. The idea conveyed by the term "thy foot" (cp. Eccl. v. 1) is then expanded into "*doing thy* **own** *pleasure* (or will) *on my holy day*."

call...a delight]—so that thou find its rest from worldly engagements (not a weariness, Amos viii. 5, but) a source of true joy and refreshment of spirit.—The verb is to be carried on to the next clause;—(If thou call) *the Holy* (or, that which is hallowed) *of the Lord honourable;* holding what He has consecrated to be worthy of thy highest esteem.

shalt honour him, not doing] Rather, *shalt honour* **it in** *not doing.*

finding thine own pleasure]—trying to secure thy own *will* and purpose (*v.* 3).

speaking thine own words] Rather, *speaking mere words* (Hos. x. 4, *s. w.*); going through a formal, heartless, routine of lip-service.

14. *Then shalt thou* **have thy delight**] (Job xxii. 26). He will make thee find it to be in fact what thou in loving obedience didst call it,—*a delight* (*v.* 13).

cause thee to ride...] as His favoured child, Deut. xxxii. 13; victorious over enemies, Deut. xxxiii. 29 (Ps. xviii. 33).

the heritage of Jacob] More than the land of promise;—ultimately, nothing short of a communication of the divine life (Deut. xxx. 20; Ps. xvii. 15: cp. Jer. x. 16).

CHAP. LIX. In lvi. 1 the Church was told of the near approach of God's salvation, and on that ground was exhorted to *do righteousness*. In lviii. 2 Israel had been introduced as claiming to be a nation that had "*done righteousness*," and therefore had a right to feel aggrieved at God's not hearing its prayers (lviii. 3, 9). The utter groundlessness of this claim is set forth in ch. lix. *Their sins* and *iniquities* had compelled Him *not* to *hear* (*v.* 2). This is pressed home on them in *vv.* 3—8. At length (*vv.* 9—15) a voice is heard, as of penitents; who acknowledge that the misery, under which they groan, is the due penalty of their transgressions. In *v.* 12 the confession attains its fulness; embodying the three terms, which were used by the high-priest on the Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 21; see intr. to ch. liii); "transgressions...sins... iniquities."—They have now exhibited the true "affliction of soul," and are fit objects of the Redeemer's pity (*v.* 20).

This chapter is intimately connected with the whole body of Isaiah's prophecies;—one of its principal nerve-knots. For instance; each of the words, "judgment," and "righteousness," occurs in it five times (see *vv.* 4, 9, 14, 16, 17; 8, 9, 11, 14, 15); but it was the want of these that had called down God's sentence against His vineyard (v. 7; cp. i. 21). From the beginning (i. 27) it had been said, that only through "judgment and righteousness" could Zion be redeemed. The two words occur, in combination or in parallelism, in v. 16, ix. 7, xvi. 5, xxviii. 17, xxxii. 1, 16, xxxiii. 5, li. 4, 5, lvi. 1, lviii. 2.

Obs. A striking confirmation of the reference of this chapter to the Day of Atonement is supplied by Rom. iii. In shewing that the Jew, no less than the Gentile, needed "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," St Paul quotes Isai. lix. 7, 8 (=Rom. iii. 15—17); and shortly afterwards (*v.* 25) uses the word ἱλαστήριον (A. V. "propitiation"), the Septuagintal word for "the Mercy Seat" (Lev. xvi. 2, 14, 15):—this being *the only place* (outside the Epistle to the Hebrews; where also it occurs *once*, ix. 5), in which he does use the word.

1. *heavy*] Or, "grown heavy." *Theirs* had done so (vi. 10); not His.

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins ‖ have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

‖ Or, *have made him hide.*

3 For [b] your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

[b] chap. 1. 15.

4 None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; [c] they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

[c] Job 15. 35. Psal. 7. 14.

5 They hatch ‖ cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and ‖ that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

‖ Or, *adders'.*

‖ Or, *that which is sprinkled* is as if *there brake out a viper.*

6 [d] Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works *are* works of iniquity, and the act of violence *is* in their hands.

[d] Job 8. 14, 15.

7 [e] Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and † destruction *are* in their paths.

[e] Prov. 1. 16. Rom. 3. 15

† Heb. *breaking.*

8 The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no ‖ judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

‖ Or, *right.*

9 ¶ Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.

10 We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in

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2. *have separated*] Lit. "have been dividers" (*s. w. a.* Gen. i. 6); permanent causes of separation.—In Exod. xxvi. 33 the word is used in reference to the veil before the Ark of the Covenant, which was drawn aside only once a year, and that for a short time;—on *the Day of Atonement.*

hid his face] Lit. *have caused a hiding of face;* of that one Face which radiated "grace" and "peace" (Num. vi. 25, 26), victory (Ps. xliv. 3), and salvation (Ps. lxvii. 1, 2).

3. *defiled with blood*] The grammatical form is peculiar; occurring besides only in Lam. iv. 14; where also *v.* 10 seems to be referred to.

4. *None calleth for...*] Rather, *None calleth* (lviii. 9) **in** *righteousness*, **and none** *pleadeth* (xliii. 26, *s. w.*) *in faithfulness.* They had *summoned* God to a trial, lviii. 2, 3. How false were all their allegations!—*They trust in* **emptiness** (H. *tohu*), shapeless unrealities; *and speak* **vanity**, baseless fictions.

5. Their thoughts and principles contained the germs of malignant evil, like the *eggs* of a *cockatrice* (*s. w. a.* xi. 8); their elaborate pleas were unsubstantial, as **spider's webs** (elsewhere only in Job viii. 14, of "*the hypocrite's hope.*") If any *eat* of their *egg*, adopting their principles, he is poisoned;—*and* **as for** *that which is crushed, a viper* (xxx. 6) *breaketh forth.* Opposition seems only to produce evil of a worse type.

Obs. John Baptist, when preaching repentance, applied the term, "brood of vipers," to the hypocritical Jews (Matt. iii. 7).

6. Those flimsy webs of sophistry could never hide their nakedness. (Cp. xxviii. 20.) *Their works;* of pretended righteousness (lvii. 12).

7. *wasting and destruction* (li. 19, *s. ww.*) *are in their* **highways**] They labour systematically to inflict havoc and ruin;—and their works recoil upon themselves (cp. i. 28, xxx. 13).

8. *The way of peace*]—which is righteousness (xxxii. 17). *In their goings;* or, **tracks** (properly, carriage-roads).

they have made them...] Lit. *their paths* (the straight paths marked out for them) *they have made unto themselves crooked:*—"*perverting* the right paths of the Lord" (Acts xiii. 10, διαστρέφων; *s. w. a.* in LXX. here).

9. In this and the three following verses, the speaker includes himself among the people whose sins he confesses (as in liii. 3—6).

Therefore...] Because they had not redressed wrong, God does not interpose to defend them. *Neither doth* **righteousness** *overtake us,* though it has been perpetually following us in our wandering; ever "near to be revealed" (lvi. 1). Cp. *v.* 11.

we wait (*v.* 11, *s. w.*) *for light* (lviii. 8)] Cp. Jer. viii. 15 (which seems moulded upon the text).

obscurity...darkness] Or, "darkness...thick darkness"—nearly *s. w. a.* viii. 22.

10. *We grope for...*] Or, *We grope as blind men* **along** *the wall* (Deut. xxviii. 29; Job v. 14); seeking in vain for an exit from prison; or, for the entrance into the city of peace (cp. Gen. xix. 11). LXX. ψηλαφήσουσι (*s. w. a.* Acts xvii. 27).

the night; *we are* in desolate places as dead *men*.

11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but *there is* none; for salvation, *but* it is far off from us.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions *are* with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

15 Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil ‖maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw *it*, and †it displeased him that *there was* no judgment.

‖ Or, *is accounted mad.*

† Heb. *it was evil in his eyes.*

16 ¶ And he saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor: [f]therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

[f] chap. 63. 5.

17 [g]For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance *for* clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

[g] Eph. 6. 17. 1 Thess. 5. 8.

[h] chap. 63. 6.

18 [h]According to *their* †deeds,

† Heb. *recompences.*

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we **have stumbled** (viii. 15) *at noon day*] with the light (not only of the law, or even of the evangelical prophet, but) of the Gospel itself shining around us. (Cp. John v. 39.)

amidst **dark** *places*, **like the** *dead*—as though shut up in sepulchres, far away from light and life. Vulg. "in caliginosis." Similarly Targ., Saadias, Kimchi, and most Jewish authorities; Rödiger (in Ges. 'Thes.' p. 1438), and Knob. Others (Vitr., Ew., Del.), "Amidst fat ones (or, fat things) we are like dead men;"—that the fourth clause of the verse may run parallel with the third ("at noon-day"). But the real parallelism is between the second and fourth clauses; each of which is an emphatic repetition of the leading thought in the clause that precedes it.—Compare also Lam. iii. 6.

11. In alternations of impatience and despondency (Del.), they **growl** with the deep, bass, voice of the bear, or *moan as doves* (xxxviii. 14).

12. *transgressions ... sins ... iniquities*] See intr. Cp. Dan. ix. 24.

are with us] haunting us; cp. Ps. li. 3.

we know them] and recognize them, alas! only too well:—*s. w. a.* Ps. li. 3 ("acknowledge").

13. Their sins were against both God and their neighbour: (*a*) *Transgressing, and* **denying** *the Lord* (Josh. xxiv. 27; cp. on ch. xxx. 9), *and* **turning back** (Ps. xliv. 18, *s. w.*) **from following** *our God*:—(*b*) *speaking oppression and* **untruth** (*s. w. a.* Deut. xix. 16,—of wronging a man by false accusation).

14. God's envoys,—*judgment*, **righteousness** (*vv.* 9, 16), *truth*, and **uprightness** (xxvi. 10),—were repelled, or even murdered.—*The street:* see on Ps. lix. 11.

15. *truth faileth*] Or, **is missing** (*s. w. a.* xl. 26); no longer forthcoming.—Whoever

departeth from evil] refusing to employ the weapons of fraud or violence,

maketh himself a prey] he as good as surrenders himself to be plundered by all.

there was no judgment] Or, "judgment *was no more*;"—just judgment, so dear to Him (lxi. 8), was no longer (Ps. xxxix. 13) among men.

16. *no man*] None worthy of the name; none who "executed judgment and sought truth" (Jer. v. 1). Cp. l. 2, lxiii. 2.

no intercessor] (*s. w. a.* liii. 12)—none to stay the plague, like Moses and Aaron (Num. xvi. 47, 48), or Phinehas (Num. xxv. 7). Cp. Ezek. xxii. 30.

therefore his **own** *arm* **wrought Him** *salvation* (Ps. xcviii. 1).

Obs. In ch. liii, He, who in *v.* 12 is seen *making intercession*, had been spoken of in *v.* 1 as "the *Arm* of the Lord."

17. To deliver His people, He must engage in *conflict*. But His weapons are all divine; "the panoply of God" (Eph. vi. 13).

vengeance] inflicting just retribution on the oppressor (xxxiv. 8):—**jealousy** (ix. 7); which cannot endure *evil* in what it loves, or allow any stain on its honour.—No weapon of offence is mentioned. His Word, the outbreathing of His Spirit (*v.* 21; cp. Eph. vi. 17), is sufficient. Cp. xi. 4.

18. *their deeds*] Or, **deserts** (Ps. xxviii. 4). Cp. iii. 9, 11 (Rev. xxii. 12).

accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in [i] like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall [l] lift up a standard against him.

20 ¶ And [k] the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

21 As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

[i] Rev. 12. 15.

[l] Or, *put him to flight.*

[k] Rom. 11. 26.

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his adversaries] *s. w. a.* i. 24; where the ungodly in Israel appear to be immediately referred to. Here the range of the term is unlimited.

19. The consequence will be the spread of true religion—the "fear of the name of the Lord," Ps. cii. 15—over the whole world (Mal. i. 11). The *west* is mentioned first; resuming the "isles" of *v.* 18: cp. on xxiv. 14.—*His glory;* see on vi. 3; xl. 5.

The victory would be gained by spiritual means. *When the* **adversary** *cometh in* (Lam. iv. 12; cp. Job v. 21) *like* **the River**, —the mighty Euphrates (viii. 7),

the Spirit of the LORD (*v.* 21; xi. 2, xl. 7, 13, lxi. 1, lxiii. 14) *shall lift up a standard* (see on xxxi. 9; *s. w. a.* x. 18) *against him*] So it had been (Vitr.) of old, Judg. xi. 34. So should it be in the captivity; which witnessed the rise of the martyr spirit. So, above all, when *the prince of this world came*, expecting to complete his victory over man (John xiv. 30). So at all later epochs (Rev. xii. 15—17).—The Targum has: "When the oppressors shall come in like an overflowing of the river Euphrates, they shall be broken by the Word of the Lord."—On another rendering, see Note A.

20. *And the Redeemer...*] Rather, *And* **there shall come a** *Redeemer* **for** *Zion, and* **for.** That the Lord Himself is Zion's Redeemer, is the uniform teaching of the prophet (xli. 14, &c., liv. 5).

Obs. In Rom. xi. 26 St Paul unites Isai. ii. 3 and xxvii. 9 with lix. 20, 21.

21. *my covenant*] —The new covenant, upheld by the never-failing Intercessor, liii. 12. Cp. liv. 10, lv. 3, lvi. 4, 6, lxi. 8.

that is upon thee] As in lxi. 1, addressed to Messiah; to whom also the clause, "My words, which I have put in Thy mouth," refers. (See on li. 16.)—Of both the "Spirit" and the "words" it is said, "They shall not depart (liv. 10 *s. w.*) out of Thy mouth;" for Christ's words *were* "spirit;" and through Him, as the Prophet of His Church, the Spirit is diffused among His spiritual *seed* (liii. 10). Cp. John xiv. 16, 17, 26.

the mouth] by which "confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 10; Deut. xxx. 14).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 19.)

The Vulg. has: "When He shall come as a violent river, which the Spirit of the Lord drives onward;" a rendering which has been followed (with slight variations) by many moderns; although the objections to it seem to be insuperable. For

(1) It gives to צַר (which had just been used in *v.* 18 in its common sense of "adversary") a very constrained meaning, of which no example occurs. (2) הנהר, which is equivalent to a proper name, is treated as if it were a common noun without the article. (3) בַּנָּהָר means "like Euphrates;" forming a complete and determinate thought by itself (as in xlviii. 18, lxvi. 12). There is no room for an appended adjective. (4) The meaning assigned to נָסַס בְּ, "hurry along," is both unproven, and quite improbable.

On the other hand, the rendering of A. V. (1) gives the known and usual meanings to the words; (2) is in accordance with the Masoretic punctuation (which is also that of Targ. and Syr:); and (3) is confirmed by the occurrence of יָבֹא צַר וְאוֹיֵב in Lam. iv. 12; for we have two other plain references in that chapter to Isai. lix; see above, on *v.* 3.

CHAPTER LX.

1 *The glory of the church in the abundant access of the Gentiles,* 15 *and the great blessings after a short affliction.*

‖ Or, *be enlightened; for thy light cometh.*

ARISE, ‖ shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the [a]Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

[a] Rev. 21. 24.

4 [b]Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

[b] chap. 49. 18.

‖ Or, *noise of the sea shall be turned toward thee.*

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the ‖ abun-

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CHAPS. LX—LXII. In the last two chapters we had a solemn Day-of-Atonement Service.—When the work of expiation was over the high-priest resumed his garments "of glory and beauty," of which he had divested himself (Lev. xvi. 23, 24). Then at the close of the day, in jubile years, the trumpet was sounded, which proclaimed release and restoration of forfeited rights throughout the land. In lx—lxii we have a corresponding time of ἀποκατάστασις (Acts iii. 21) depicted: see on lxi. 1—3, 10. It is a period of Creation: in which the human world is raised out of the confusion and desolation, the darkness and death (lviii. 12, lix. 4, 9, 10, lxi. 4), into which it had fallen:—the fiat, "Let there be light," is issued (lx. 1, 19, 20);—a new Paradise is planted, in which the fruits of righteousness spring forth (lx. 21, lxi. 3, 11);—and "the Holy people" (lxii. 12) is seen prepared as a Bride for her husband; the true "Mother of all living" (Gen. iii. 20; Gal. iv. 26).

If the question be asked, Do these chapters refer to the First, or to the Second, Advent of Christ?—the answer is, that they include references to both. The work of redemption, begun at the First (cp. Luke iv. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 6, v. 17; Eph. v. 8—14; Heb. xii. 22), is completed at the Second (2 Pet. iii. 13).

CHAP. LX. Widely as this and the preceding chapters differ, they are yet very closely bound together: the relation between them being (for the most part) that of *contrast*. Thus (1) in lix, the people had been waiting in vain for light, *v.* 9, in *dark places*, like the *dead*, *v.* 10; now their *light* is come, and they are bidden to *arise* (from the dead) and *shine*, lx. 1, 3, 9. (2) In lix, *righteousness* and *peace* stood at a distance, *vv.* 4, 8, 9, 14; now they govern the holy city, lx. 17. (3) *Salvation* was far off, lix. 11, while *violence* reigned, *v.* 6, causing *wasting and destruction*, *v.* 7; now the walls of the city are called *salvation*, *violence* is no more heard in her land, neither *wasting and destruction* [the phrase elsewhere only in Jer. xlviii. 3] within her border, lx. 18. (4) In lix, reverence for *the Name of the Lord* and *His glory* was promised, *v.* 19; now it is realized, lx. 1, 2, 9. (5) In lix, a Redeemer was foreseen, *v.* 20; now His work is accomplished, lx. 16.

The imagery seems to be in part borrowed from the account of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon, in 1 K. x. 1—10. See Note A.

1. *Arise*] (*s. w. a.* li. 17, lii. 2),
shine]—strictly, "be light." But the two senses are inseparable in fact. Cp. Eph. v. 8, 9: "Now *are ye light* in the Lord:—walk as children of light."
thy light is come] The bright vision of ch. ii. 2—5 is fulfilled.
the glory of the LORD (see on xl. 5) *is risen*] As the morning sun (lviii. 10; Mal. iii. 20, *s. w.*).

In Eph. v. 14, this verse is combined, in a paraphrastic form, with li. 17, lii. 1, 2. The Ephesians had been walking *in darkness*, *as dead men* (Eph. ii. 1, 5, v. 8—11; cp. ch. lix. 9, 10): but the Redeemer had come and the Spirit been given (v. 2, 9; cp. ch. lix. 20, 21). Therefore they were to *awake* (ch. li. 17, lii. 1) out of sleep, and *arise* from the dead, that Christ, the Lord, might *shine upon* them, and they, again, shed His light on the Gentiles around.

2. *the darkness*] for this light "shineth in the darkness;" John i. 4; Phil. ii. 15.
be seen] Or, "shew itself" (Exod. xvi. 10).

3. *of thy rising*] Zion, reflecting rays of the divine glory, herself shines as a sun (cp. Judg. v. 31).

4. *Lift up...to thee*] Repeated from xlix. 18. The nations flock towards Zion, bringing with them her long-scattered children (cp. xi. 12, xlix. 22).
nursed at thy *side*] Rather, **carried on** *their side.* Hindu mothers may often be seen carrying a child seated on their hip.

5. *see, and...*] Or, *see it, and be enlightened* (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxiv. 5); growing bright with joy; cp. lxvi. 14.

dance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the ‖ forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

‖ Or, *wealth.*

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring [c] gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

[c] chap. 61. 6.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who *are* these *that* fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, [d] to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

[d] Gal. 4. 26.

10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates [e] shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the ‖ forces of the Gentiles, and *that* their kings *may be* brought.

[e] Rev. 21. 25.

‖ Or, *wealth.*

12 For the nation and kingdom

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thine heart shall fear] with a joyful awe (Jer. xxxiii. 9); like that which came on Jacob, when he found how much vaster God's house was than he had supposed (Gen. xxviii. 17).

and be enlarged] to understand, and sympathize with, the boundless goodness of God. (Cp. 2 Cor. vi. 11, 13.)

the abundance of the sea] The *multitude* (Gen. xvii. 4, 5, *s. w.*) of peoples, who dwelt on the western sea; along with their *riches* (Ps. xxxvii. 16; 1 Chro. xxix. 16, *s. w.*).

converted unto thee]—changing its current. For a long time *Zion's diminution* had been "the riches of the Gentiles" (Rom. xi. 12). Now the nations shall find themselves all the more enriched by contributing to *the fulness* of Israel (ib.).

the forces] Rather (marg.), **the wealth** (*s. w. a.* lxi. 6; Zech. xiv. 14).

6. *The multitude*] (*s. w. a.* Job xxii. 11; Ezek. xxvi. 10); the continual "stream" of caravans.

Midian and his son *Ephah* (Gen. xxv. 2, 4), like *Sheba*, *Kedar*, and *Nebaioth* (ib. 3, 13), were all descended from Abraham.

gold and incense] for God's temple.—Arabia procured its gold, probably, from Ceylon and Malacca; its frankincense (see on Exod. xxx. 34) from India.—The presents with which the Magi welcomed the appearance of the True Light (Matt. ii. 11), were an anticipatory, "germinant," fulfilment of the prophecy.

they shall shew forth (lit. tell the tidings of, LXX. εὐαγγελιοῦνται) *the praises of the* LORD] (lxiii. 7)—the excellencies (ἀρετάς) of Him, who "called them out of darkness" (1 Pet. ii. 9).

7. *shall minister unto thee*] as in *v.* 10, "their kings *shall minister unto thee.*" Plainly, therefore, the language is allegorical. (Cp. on xxxiv. 6.)

shall come up...on...] Rather, *shall* **ascend** *My altar;* mounting it as willing sacrifices.

with acceptance] Lit. "upon (or, according to) good-will;" which *may* refer to their ready cheerfulness of self-devotion (Vitr.); but more probably to their being *acceptable* offerings (as LXX. and A. V.).

Obs. St Paul, who in Rom. xi. 26 had quoted ch. lix. 20, 21, shortly afterwards (Rom. xii. 1) adopts the figurative language of the text; beseeching the Romans to "present their bodies *a living sacrifice*," which was their true "rational λατρεία" (λατρεύω being the word used by LXX. for "minister" in Num. xvi. 9).

glorify the house of my glory] Lit. "My house of beauty (lxiv. 11, H. 10) will I beautify."

8. Fleets are seen approaching from the west;—borne along, as a cloud by the wind; or *as doves to their* **lattices** (Song of Sol. iii. 6),—in one company, but perpetually varying their combinations.

9. *shall wait for me*] Cp. xlii. 4, li. 5. —Europe's expectancy was symbolized in the "Come over and help us" of the man of Macedon (Acts xvi. 9).

the ships of Tarshish first] Cp. on xxiii. 18.

unto the name of the LORD] Jer. iii. 17.—What was said of Messiah in lv. 5 is here applied to His Church.

10. *sons of strangers*] Or, **aliens** (lvi. 6, 7, *s. w.*).

their kings] Verified (1) in Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes; (2) in many Christian monarchs.

11. *forces*] **wealth** (as in *v.* 5).

and that *their...*] Or, "and their kings,

that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted.

13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised
[f] Rev. 3. 9. thee shall [f] bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through *thee*, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou *shalt* call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 [g] The sun shall be no more thy [g] Rev. 21. 23. & 22. 5. light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

21 Thy people also *shall be* all

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led as captives;" gracing the conqueror's triumph (cp. xlv. 14).

12. *serve thee*] the King's bride; cp. Ps. lxxii. 11.

be utterly wasted] Or, **become** *utterly* **waste** (xxxiv. 10, *s. w.*). Cp. Zech. xiv. 16, 17.

13. *The glory of Lebanon*] Here, apparently, the cedars.

the fir tree, &c.] as in xli. 19. According to Delitzsch, the trees are to be thought of as planted in the approaches to the temple.

place of my feet] Cp. Ezek. xliii. 7. In 1 Chro. xxviii. 2, the "ark of the covenant" is God's "footstool." In ch. lxvi. 1, the whole earth is so named.

14. *that afflicted thee*] li. 23.

The Zion of the Holy One] answering to His design, and fitted for His abode.

15. *Whereas thou hast*] Lit. "*Instead of* thy being" (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 17).

forsaken] vi. 12, liv. 6.

hated] Used of a wife who is disesteemed; Gen. xxix. 31; Deut. xxi. 15.

16. *suck the milk...the breast...*] Cherished by them with tenderest regard.—The *breast* of kings (Del.) is necessarily allegorical.

I the LORD...] Repeated from xlix. 26.

17. *For...*] **Instead of...**; as in iii. 24: cp. lxi. 3. The golden age of Solomon (1 K. x. 21, 27) soon passed away. Within a few years after his death his "gold" had become "brass" (2 Chro. xii. 9, 10). Now all should be restored permanently.

I will also make thy officers (or, thy magistracy) *peace*] wholly devoted to peace (as in Ps. cxx. 7, "I am peace"); and exercising their rule so that they are like an element of peace diffused through the community.

thine exactors] Overseers, or superintendents of work; LXX. ἐπισκόπους. They will be *righteousness;* wholly righteous, and diffusing righteousness.

18. The *walls* of the city of God will be impregnable,—*Salvation* itself. Her *gates* (unlike those, which "lamented and mourned," iii. 26) shall be filled with jubilant anthems; shall be mere *Praise.*

19. Cp. xxiv. 23. The Targ. has, "Thou wilt need no more the sun, &c." Cp. Rev. xxi. 23.

neither for brightness...] More nearly, "and as for illumination (*nogah*), the moon shall not give thee light."—*Nogah* is specially used of what shines brightly *amidst darkness* (iv. 5, l. 10; Joel ii. 10). In that city shall be no night (Rev. xxi. 25).

20. **thy** *days of mourning*—as for the dead; *s. w. a.* Gen. l. 4; Deut. xxxiv. 8. Babylon's capture of Jerusalem proclaimed the death of the old Israel. The defunct Mosaic

righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

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dispensation was buried beneath the ruins of the temple. But a new Israel would be created (xliii. 1); a new covenant established (liv. 10); a nobler Zion raised from the dead (*v.* 1); and Messiah consecrated to comfort "Zion's mourners" (lxi. 3; cp. lvii. 18).

21. *Thy people also...*] Lit. "And as for thy people, they are all righteous." Cp. xxvi. 2, lii. 1. All are righteous, because "all are disciples of the Lord" (liv. 13).

inherit the land] (cp. lvii. 13)—"the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12)—the new earth and heavens.

the branch of my planting,—or, "the shoot (xi. 1) from My plant" (Ezek. xxxiv. 29): *the work of my hands* (xxix. 23), *that I may be glorified* (xliv. 23, xlix. 3, lxi. 3)—on account of the goodness and abundance of its fruit (John xv. 8). The Kethiv has, "of His planting" (cp. lxi. 3); which preserves the continuity of *vv.* 19, 20; where (as in *vv.* 1—6) the third person is used. There is a similar change in *v.* 9; at the end of which we find the third person, though in all the rest of *vv.* 7—17 the first person alone occurs.

The choice Vine, which the Well-beloved "planted" (v. 1, 2), had borne only wild fruit; yet "a shoot" should spring out of it, which would bring forth "righteousness and praise before all the nations" (lxi. 11). Cp. on li. 16.

22. *a strong nation*] Cp. Micah iv. 7.

will hasten it in his time] A reply to the unbelieving challenge in v. 19; cp. xxviii. 16. God's work shall be matured *in due season*: and when it has come, will seem to have come rapidly. Cp. xlviii. 3; (Rev. xxii. 20).

NOTE A.

(REFERENCES IN CHAP. LX TO 1 KINGS X.)

The Queen of Sheba had heard "the fame" of Solomon in regard of *the Name of the Lord* (cp. *v.* 9). She came with a very great train (חיל, *s. w. a.* in *vv.* 5, 11); with *camels*, *gold*, and *spices* (cp. *v.* 6). She blessed the Lord, because He had raised up Solomon to do *judgment and righteousness* (cp. *vv.* 17, 21):—a sign that He loved Israel *for ever* (*vv.* 15, 19, 20).

That remarkable incident might be viewed (and Ps. lxxii. 10, 15, shews that Solomon himself did so view it) as a pledge of what should take place under the reign of the Righteous King.

CHAPTER LXI.

1 *The office of Christ.* 4 *The forwardness,* 7 *and blessings of the faithful.*

THE [a]Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good ti- [a] Luke 4. 18.

CHAP. LXI. There is a manifest reference in *vv.* 1—3 to the Year of Jubile. In fact, the words used in *v.* 1, "proclaim liberty," are technical words:—see Lev. xxv. 10; "Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and *proclaim liberty* (*s. w.*) throughout the land." (See also Jer. xxxiv. 8, 15, 17, *s. w.*)—Compare introduction to chh. lx—lxii.

The connexion between lx and lxi is easily seen in *v.* 3, when compared with lx. 9, 15, 18, 20, 21.

1. *The Spirit of the Lord* JEHOVAH (xlviii. 16) *is upon me*] Language which implies that the Speaker is that "Servant of the Lord" (xlii. 1), whose office it was to "open the blind eyes," and to "bring out the prisoners from the prison" (ib. 7).—Cp. on xi. 2.

because] The Spirit rests abidingly upon Him, *because* He has been consecrated to a work which only God's Spirit can perform.

the LORD hath anointed me] Aaron was anointed to be high-priest by Moses (Exod. xl. 13; Lev. viii. 12). The LORD Himself has anointed Messiah (Ps. xlv. 7, "God, Thy own God, hath anointed Thee").—So we know that when Jesus was baptized (amidst crowds, who were "confessing their sins," Matt. iii. 6, as on a great Day of Atonement), the heavens were "rent" (Mark i. 10), as if the Veil which separated God and man were torn asunder (see on lxiv. 2), and "God *anointed Him with the Holy Ghost*" (Acts x. 38), declaring Him to be "His beloved Son, *in whom He was well-pleased*" (cp. xlii. 1). Shortly afterwards Jesus publicly applied this

dings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

4 ¶ And they shall [b] build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. [b] chap. 58. 12.

5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers.

6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call

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prophecy to Himself (Luke iv. 17); and then went forth to proclaim the world's jubile (ib. *v.* 43, viii. 1).

preach good tidings unto the meek] Matt. v. 3, 5, xi. 5, 29.

he hath sent me] See on viii. 6. In Heb. iii. 1 the *sending* ("Apostle") and the *anointing* ("High-Priest") are combined.

to bind up (i. 6, iii. 7, xxx. 26) *the brokenhearted*]—the work of God Himself, Ps. cxlvii. 3; cp. ch. lvii. 15.

to proclaim liberty (or, release; see introd.) *to the captives*] carried away from their homes, prisoners of war (cp. xlix. 24, 25). The LXX. has ἄφεσιν, as in Lev. xxv. 10. In Lev. xxv. 28—33, &c. ἄφεσις is used for "jubile."—It was such a release, then, as involved a return to their lost inheritance.

and **opening** *of the prison to them that are bound* (*s. w. a.* xlix. 9)] So (in substance) the Syr., Symm., Vulg., Rashi, A. Ezra, Ges., Knob. Others (Vitr., Del.) take it to mean "opening of eyes" (that being the way in which the verb is commonly used; cp. xxxv. 5, xlii. 7). The LXX. paraphrased; "recovery of sight to the blind." The Targum combined the two renderings; "to the prisoners, '*Appear in the light*'." The captives "sitting in darkness" (xlii. 7) were practically blinded—(sometimes, indeed, actually had their eyes put out, Judg. xvi. 21; 2 K. xxv. 7).

St Luke, in his quotation (iv. 18), first gives the Septuagintal rendering (familiar to his Hellenist readers), and then adds a clause, from the LXX. version of lviii. 6, which nearly represents the other meaning.

In reality:—the prison-house, from which man's spirit needs to be delivered, is ignorance of God; and this may be viewed, on one side as blindness, on the other as darkness. (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6.)

2. *the acceptable year*] (cp. xlix. 8). Lit. "year of acceptance;"—in which He will "be gracious" (Ps. lxxxv. 1, *s. w.*) to His people, and *accept* their offerings (lx. 7, *s. w.*), and fulfil in them the *good pleasure* (Ps. li. 18, *s. w.*) of His will towards them (Eph. i. 5, 9).

day of vengeance] (lxiii. 4). See on i. 24, xxxiv. 8. Our Lord ended His reading in the synagogue at, "the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 19); but (as Mr Birks remarks) at the close of His ministry (ib. xxi. 22) He spoke of "the days of vengeance."

comfort all that mourn]—as in the second Beatitude (Matt. v. 4). The "broken-hearted" and "meek" of *v.* 1 correspond to the first and third Beatitudes.

3. *To appoint unto*] Or, "to provide for" (cp. Gen. xlv. 7, *s. w.*): to make firm and stable arrangements for *securing* to them—all that follows.

them that mourn in Zion] Lit. "the mourners of Zion:" cp. lvii. 18.

beauty...] Or, "a coronet" (*s. w. a. v.* 10, iii. 20); an ornamental head-dress:—instead of the *ashes* used by mourners (2 S. xiii. 19).

for ... for ...] **instead of** ... (as in iii. 24, lx. 17).

the oil of joy] with which He Himself had been anointed (Ps. xlv. 7, *s. www.*).

for the spirit of heaviness] Or, **instead of a drooping spirit**;—feeble and languid, and ready to become extinct (*s. w. a.* xlii. 3).

trees] Lit. "oaks."

the planting of the LORD] lx. 21.

4. *shall build the old* **waste places**] (*s. w. a.* lviii. 12); whether of Israel, v. 17, xliv. 26; Lev. xxvi. 31, 33; or of the world, so long laid waste by sin (cp. on liv. 3).

5. As in xiv. 1, 2, God's Israel shall find those who were once employed to desolate the land (v. 17) ready to assist in its cultivation. Earthly power (once so adverse) shall give its aid to the Church.

6. Israel would at length realize its high vocation as "a kingdom of priests" (Exod.

[c] chap. 60. 6 you the Ministers of our God: [c] ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 ¶ For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they *are* the seed *which* the LORD hath blessed.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom [†] decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

[†] Heb. *decketh as a priest.*

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

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xix. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5—9). St Paul spoke of himself as being "a minister (λειτοῦργον) of Jesus Christ to the nations, ministering (ἱερουργοῦντα) the Gospel of God."

Their spiritual service would be rewarded by a willing supply of temporal things; cp. Rom. xv. 27; 1 Cor. ix. 11. They should *eat* of *the riches of the* **nations**, which had come into the city of God (lx. 5, *s. ww.*).

in their...boast yourselves] So Targ., Vulg., A. Ezra, Kimchi, Vitr., Del.—Or (with Rashi, and most moderns), "of their glory shall ye receive in exchange." In reward for the benefits you confer on them, they will gladly bestow on you honour and dignity.—Israel of old, in the hope of gaining earthly advantage, had "bartered away their" true "glory" (Jer. ii. 11; cp. Ps. cvi. 20); thereby bringing on themselves shame and humiliation (cp. especially Hos. iv. 6, 7). Now, when they are faithful to their vocation of imparting divine knowledge to the nations, they receive from them an ample return of respectful homage.

7. **Instead of** *your shame* (i. 29, liv. 4; Hos. iv. 7) ye shall have *double*—the double of what has been wrongfully taken away by your oppressors (*v.* 8; Exod. xxii. 4, 7, 9). Cp. Zech. ix. 12.

and for *confusion...*] Or, "and as for disgrace,—they shall rejoice in their portion." What was said to Aaron, "Thou shalt have no portion (*s. w.*) among them; *I am thy portion* (*s. w.*)," applies now to the whole community. (Cp. Ps. xvi. 5, cxix. 57; Jer. x. 16.) *Therefore*—since they are wholly devoted to God—*in their* **own** *land they shall possess the double.* (Cp. Ps. xxxvii. 29; Matt. v. 5.)

8. *love judgment*] *s. ww. a.* Ps. xxxvii. 28.

robbery for burnt offering] Rather, **that which is wrested away by injustice** (*s. w. a.* Ps. lviii. 2, H. 3; cp. Job v. 16);—taken from the meek (x. 2) by violence. So the LXX., Targ., Saadias, Gesen., Del., Knob.—The A. V. follows the Vulg., A. Ezra, Rashi, &c. (influenced, probably, by Mal. i. 13).

I will direct...] Rather, *I will* **assign their reward** *in truth*;—with an exact regard to their merits: yet, it would seem, with a liberality which infinitely transcends any human desert; for they are to have "everlasting joy" (*v.* 7) guaranteed them by *an everlasting covenant.*

9. *shall be known*]—and their true character recognized; because God's favour so clearly rests upon them.

among the people] Or, **amidst the peoples** (cp. Micah v. 8).

the seed which the LORD *hath blessed*] the true heirs of the benediction given to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 17, 18).

10. *clothed...salvation*] Cp. Ps. cxxxii. 16. He is invested as High-Priest (not by man, as Aaron was, but) by God Himself (*s. w. a.* xxii. 21; Exod. xxix. 5, 8).

decketh himself with ornaments] Rather, **putteth on priestly coronet** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 3). Cp. Song of Sol. iii. 11. Aq. ἱερατευόμενον στεφάνῳ.

11. *bringeth forth*] Or, **putteth forth** (*s. w. a.* Gen. i. 12).

her bud] Or, "springing shoot;" Hebr. *tsemach* (*s. w. a.* iv. 2).

causeth...to spring forth] *s. w. a.* xlv. 8, lv. 10; Gen. ii. 9.

before all the nations] So that the whole world is become Eden: reclaimed for ever out of the hand of the unrighteous spoiler. In this Year of Jubile the earth is restored to its proper

CHAPTER LXII.

1 *The fervent desire of the prophet to confirm the church in God's promises.* 5 *The office of the ministers (unto which they are incited) in preaching the gospel,* 10 *and preparing the people thereto.*

FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burneth.

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

4 [a] Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called [‖] Hephzi-bah, and thy land [‖] Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

[a] Hos. 1. 10. [1] Pet. 2. 10. [‖] That is, *My delight is in her.* [‖] That is, *Married.*

5 ¶ For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and [†] *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* shall thy God rejoice over thee.

[†] Heb. *with the joy of the bridegroom.*

6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: [‖] ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

[‖] Or, *ye that are the LORD'S remembrancers*

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heirs, the righteous seed. For all those weary ages of wrong, compensation shall be made. The Priestly King will re-consecrate shame-stricken men, and they shall now be "kings and priests unto God" (Rev. i. 6).

CHAP. LXII. The speaker in *v.* 1 has been taken by some to be the prophet; or (since *his* intercession could not be perpetual) the prophetic body. The Targ., Kimchi, Grotius, Del. (and A. Ezra on *v.* 4) make it to be the LORD. This latter view is true in substance; in form, however, it would be more exact to say, the speaker is the same as in lxi. 1, Messiah;—He who "makes intercession" (liii. 12) continually on behalf of His redeemed.

1. *will I not hold my peace*] The verb is used of the LORD in lxiv. 12, lxv. 6; cp. lvii. 11.

will not rest] *s.w.a.* in Ps. lxxxiii. 1, of God: in Ruth iii. 18, of Boaz; in reference to his "performing the part of a kinsman" (or, redeemer, *Goël*).

until the righteousness (*v.* 2) *thereof go forth*] —clearly manifested (Ps. xxxvii. 6).

as brightness] (*s. w. a.* lx. 19);—as light shining out of darkness. A reversal of lix. 9.

as a lamp] Or, torch,—like that which Abraham saw in vision, when the "horror of great darkness" had fallen upon him (Gen. xv. 17, *s.w.*).

2. *thy righteousness*]—O Zion, O city of holiness (lii. 1).

a new name] (cp. lxv. 15); that of "the holy people" (*v.* 12): which is the title given by St Paul to Christians, Rom. i. 7, 1 Cor. i. 2 (κλητοὶ ἅγιοι, holy by vocation).

3. *a royal diadem in the hand*] Lit. "in the open hand," or, palm. The diadem was held in God's hand, until the time came for its being placed, in all its completeness, upon the brow of Messiah.

4. *Forsaken*] Heb. "Azubah," *s. w. a.* vi. 12, liv. 6. The contrast of this is given in the third clause by "Hephzi-bah," "My delight is in her."—Both Azubah and Hephzi-bah occur as actual names; the former being that of Jehoshaphat's mother (2 Chro. xx. 31), the latter that of Hezekiah's wife (2 K. xxi. 1).

Desolate] Lit. "Desolation;" *s.w.a.* i. 7, vi. 11, lxiv. 10. Contrasted with this is the "Beûlah" of the fourth clause;—which means, "held," or "possessed" (Aq. ἐσχημένη), and secondarily, "married" (liv. 1).—The Targ. and Vulg. have, "inhabited;" a justifiable rendering in itself (see the noun in Josh. xxiv. 11; 2 S. xxi. 12); but not suited to *v.* 5.

5. The address is still (*v.* 2) to Zion.

marrieth] (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 4);—winning for himself an inalienable right to "have and to hold."—*Thy children* (O city of holiness) will then obtain what they prize above all else, an indefeasible title to the possession of thee, the object of their unreserved devotion.

as the bridegroom] Cp. Eph. v. 27; Rev. xix. 7, xxi. 2.

rejoiceth] Cp. Deut. xxx. 9.

6. Messiah has *set*, or appointed, *watchmen upon the walls* of the sacred city; "warders of the walls" (Song of Sol. v. 7):—priests (Num. iii. 7), and prophets (ch. xxi. 11; cp. lii. 8).

that make mention...] Better (as marg.),

7 And give him no † rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, † Surely I will no more give thy corn *to be* meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

10 ¶ Go through, go through the gates; [b] prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, [c] Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his [d] reward *is* with him, and his [‖] work before him.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

† Heb. *silence.*

† Heb. *If I give, &c.*

[b] chap. 40. 3. & 57. 14.

[c] Zech. 9. 9. Matth. 21. 5. John 12. 15.

[d] chap. 40. 10.

[‖] Or, *recompence.*

CHAPTER LXIII.

1 Christ sheweth who he is, 2 what his victory over his enemies, 7 and what his mercy toward his church. 10 In his just wrath he remembereth his free mercy. 15 The church in their prayer, 17 and complaint, profess their faith.

"that are the Lord's remembrancers;" reminding Him of His covenant.

keep not silence]—(*s.w.a.* Ps. lxxxiii. 1); never cease from urgent intercession.

7. *no rest*] Lit. (marg.), "silence." Constrain Him to utter His decree for Zion's salvation (*v.* 11). Cp. Luke xviii. 1—8.

till he establish] Rather, "until He make ready," or, "prepare Himself" (as A.V. in Job viii. 8, and ch. li. 13, marg.).

8. *the arm of his strength*] **His strong arm** (Ps. lxxxix. 10, *s.www.*).

9. *they that have...*] Or, *they that* **gather** *it* (the corn)...; *they that* **store it in** (referring to the vintage). The priests were bidden to eat the tithe of corn, &c., "before the Lord" (Deut. xiv. 23). Cp. Jer. xxxi. 12.

10. *Go through...*] Or, **Pass on, pass on** (Josh. vi. 7), **through** *the gates;* the gates of Zion, which is the city spoken of throughout this chapter (*vv.* 1, 6, 7, 11, 12). They are to go in to make preparation for the arrival of Zion's salvation (*v.* 11).

the way of the people]—who are advancing under their Lord's protection (cp. xl. 3, lvii. 14).

cast up...] lvii. 14.

gather out the stones] Clear it, so that (the Heb. implies) not a stone be left. The Targ. refers it to "the thoughts of the imagination, which are as a stone of stumbling."

a standard for the **peoples**] xlix. 22.

11. *the end of...*] xlii. 10, xlviii. 20.

Say ye..,Zion] In Matt. xxi. 5 this clause is combined with Zech. ix. 9.

his work] Or, "recompence;" see on xl. 10.

12. *The holy people*] See on *v.* 2, lxi. 6.

redeemed] xxxv. 9, 10.

Zion, the city which for a long time "no man sought," or cared for (Jer. xxx. 14, 17), should be named *Sought out* (*s.w.a.* Ps. cxi. 2). Men would resort to her, to see her glory and to examine into the wonders which God had wrought for her.

not forsaken] Or, "unforsaken" (Hendn.): —the "former things are forgotten" (lxv. 17).

CHAPS. LXIII—LXVI. In lix. 20 it was promised that *a Redeemer* should come for Zion; the character of His work being shewn by the additional clause, "for them that turn away from transgression." For all others, who made themselves His "enemies," there was reserved a display of *divine retribution* (lix. 16—19).

In chh. lx—lxii the glories of the *redeemed Zion* were described. The prophecy now returns to the day of "vengeance" (not lost sight of even in the intervening section, see lx. 12, lxi. 2).

The language of lxiii. 3, 5, is clearly an expansion of lix. 16. All human endeavours to restore the sway of righteousness have failed. God's own arm, therefore, must interpose to work out salvation; and this can be done only amidst an outpouring of "fury" (lxiii. 3, 5, 6) upon His "adversaries" (lix. 18, lxvi. 6, 14). Among these are numbered the rebellious portion of His own people, whom He had treated with tenderest love and pity (lxiii. 7—10). They compelled Him to become "their enemy," and "fight against them" (ib. 10), to "recompense their iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers into their bosom" (lxv. 6), to "slay" them, and call His servants "by another name" (lxv. 15).

These concluding chapters, then, set forth that severance of the true Israel from the false,

WHO *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* †glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

†Heb. *decked.*

[a] Rev. 19. 13.

2 Wherefore [a] *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

4 For the [b] day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

[b] chap. 34. 8.

5 And I looked, and *there was*

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which had been foretold from the beginning of Isaiah's vision (i. 24);—indeed, from the first entrance into Canaan (Deut. xxxii. 41—43). The immediate reference would seem to be to literal Israel; but, unquestionably, we are to look on God's dealings with Israel as an exhibition of the principles on which He governs the world at large. And this section teaches that neither Israel nor Christendom must be content with praying, "*Look*, we beseech Thee; *we are Thy people*" (lxiv. 9). The answer for *all* is one and the same, "To this man *will I look* (*s.w.*), even to the lowly and contrite of spirit" (lxvi. 2).

While there is thus much of unity in the present group of chapters, it is obvious that there is a yet closer relation between (1) lxiii and lxiv (comp. lxiii. 15 with lxiv. 7, 9, 10; lxiii. 17 with lxiv. 7): (2) lxv and lxvi (comp. lxv. 2 with lxvi. 3, 18; lxv. 6 with lxvi. 6; lxv. 12, 13 with lxvi. 4, 5; lxv. 17 with lxvi. 22).

CHAP. LXIII. The desolation of "Edom" in ch. xxxiv was contrasted with the everlasting joy of "the ransomed of the Lord" in Zion (xxxv. 10). The same contrast recurs here. Ch. lxii ended with speaking of "the Lord's redeemed" (*v.* 12). We are now warned that the redemption of God's people involved judgment on their foes; who are described under the symbolic names of "Edom" and "Bozrah": see on xxxiv. 6,—observing also the resemblance of xxxiv. 8 and lxiii. 4. As in xxxiv. 5—8, the righteous retribution falls upon *all*,—inside Israel or outside it, visible or invisible,—who have incurred the "anathema" of God's law.

It is evident that the Person who speaks in *vv.* 3—6 is *Divine* (so even A. Ezra and Knobel).

1. *Who is this that cometh*] Cp. Song of Sol. iii. 6. Can it be He for whom Zion was so anxiously looking out (lxii. 11; cp. lix. 20)? It must; for in *v.* 4 He says, "My redeemed;" cp. lxii. 12.

from Edom] Conducting His people to their inheritance; as when, of old, He "marched from the field of Edom" (Judg. v. 4; cp. Deut. xxxiii. 2; Hab. iii. 3). *Edom* signifies "red;" see the adjective in *v.* 2. (The *verb* occurs in i. 18.)

with dyed (or purple) *garments from Bozrah*]—the "place of vintage," xxxiv. 6.

glorious in his apparel] (cp. Ps. civ. 1): for He is clad in robes of Salvation and Righteousness, lxi. 10.

travelling] Or, "bending," as one who stoops forward in energetic marching. (See on li. 14.)

the greatness of his strength] Cp. xl. 26, l. 2.

that speak in righteousness] xlv. 23. (Cp. Rev. xix. 11.)

mighty to save] (*v.* 8). See on xix. 20.

2. art thou *red in...*] Lit. "is it red to..."

that treadeth in the **winepress**] The figure is used of the judgments inflicted on Judah, in Lam. i. 15; "*the* LORD *hath trodden* the virgin-daughter of Judah as in a winepress" (*s.w.*); on the nations at large, in Joel iii. 13 (Rev. xiv. 19, 20, xix. 15).

3. *I have trodden* **the winetrough** *alone*] He is alone now in judgment (cp. John v. 22), as before in making atonement (Ps. xxii. 11).

of the **peoples** *there was none with me*] For who among men could be associated with the alone Holy in His work of retribution on sin? Cp. lix. 16.

I will tread them] In *v.* 6 it is, "I will tread down *peoples*;"—the enemies from whom He is rescuing His redeemed.

and trample them] *s.w.a.* xxvi. 6, xxviii. 3.

their blood] The A.V. has followed the Vulg. in translating the same word by "blood" in *v.* 3, and by "strength" in *v.* 6. (It is the word rendered "strength" in 1 S. xv. 29; Lam. iii. 18.) Render; "their **life-blood** shall spring forth."

will stain] **have stained.** The unique form of the Hebrew verb, *gaäl*, seems meant to connect it with the word "redeemed" (*geïl*) in *v.* 4; as though the "stains" were marks of His having fulfilled the duty of *Gôël*,—the avenger of blood and the reinstater of his oppressed kinsman.

4. *the day of vengeance*] xxxiv. 8, lxi. 2. When Moses had led Israel to the borders of the Promised Land, he was commanded to "avenge the children of Israel," and to "avenge

none to help; and I wondered that *there was* none to uphold: therefore
[e] chap. 59. 16. mine own [e]arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

7 ¶ I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, *and* the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

8 For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: [d]in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

[d] Deut. 7. 7, 8.

[e] Exod. 15. 24. Numb. 14. 11. Psal. 78. 56. & 95. 9.

10 ¶ But they [e]rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was

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the Lord," of Midian (Num. xxxi. 1, 2). That avenging host slew the arch-seducer, Balaam. So at the end of the great prophetic Song, in Deut. xxxii, the nations are invited to take part in Israel's joy, because the Lord has avenged "the blood of His servants" (*v.* 43). That vengeance cannot fail to reach the arch-adversary. (Cp. on i. 24.)

the year of my redeemed] Cp. lxi. 2, lxii. 12. The redemption-price had long been paid; the actual re-occupation of the inheritance is now to follow.

5. Cp. lix. 16. *there was none to help*] *s. ww. a.* Lam. i. 7 (respecting helpless Jerusalem).

I wondered] The prostration of the elect people (and of the whole race of man) beneath the power of the enemy, was in itself a strange, a marvellous, thing. God took notice of it, and (in condescension to the necessities of human thought) is said to have felt surprise (cp. Jer. xiv. 9; Mark vi. 6).

none to uphold]—to uphold the cause of righteousness; God's cause.—No man; no angel.

6. *will tread down* **peoples**] The verb is the same as in xiv. 25; Ps. lx. 12 ("He it is that shall tread down our enemies"). The derived noun was used in xviii. 2, 7, xxii. 5.

make them drunk **with** *my fury*]—with the cup of fury, li. 17; Jer. xxv. 15. (Cp. Rev. xvi. 6.)

7. In the assured conviction that God will work out the promised redemption and restoration, the prophet supplies faithful Israel with a hymn of thanksgiving, supplication, and confession (lxiii. 7—lxiv. 12). It begins with the same words that Ps. lxxxix (*Misericordias Domini*) begins with; the Psalm, in which faith triumphs so marvellously over the apparent disannulling of God's covenant. Compare also *v.* 18 with Ps. lxxxix. 40. Some of the characteristic expressions of the hymn are found in Ps. lxxx. (See Note A.)

I will mention (or, record) *the* **mercies**] *s. ww. a.* lv. 3; Lam. iii. 22. *The praises*, lx. 6. *According to all:* or, "as beseemeth all." (There should be a semicolon after "on us.")

the great goodness] *s. ww. a.* Ps. cxlv. 7. *According to His* **compassions** *and to the multitude of His* **mercies** (*s. ww. a.* Lam. iii. 33).

8. God had acted to Israel with the trustfulness which a parent shews to his children. *Children that will not* **deal falsely**; *s. w. a.* Ps. xliv, 17.

9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted*] So the Keri (followed by A. Ezra, Luther, Vitr., Ew., Del.). The Kethiv (which is supported by the ancient versions,—LXX., Theod., Targ., Syr., Vulg.; and is followed by Rashi, Saadias, and other rabbins, Gesen., De Wette, &c.) is rendered: "In all their adversity was He *no adversary*";—quite *the reverse*. His heaviest chastisements were sent with the view of *frustrating* the designs of their worst enemies, and were removed as soon as that work was accomplished; cp. x. 12. For further remarks see Note B.

the angel of his presence] In whom His *presence* resided (Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15): through whom the "light of His countenance" (Ps. xliv. 3; cp. lxxx. 1) shone upon Israel.—Cp. Dr Mill, 'On Pantheism,' p. 353 f.; Dr Pusey, 'On Daniel,' p. 515, 6. See also note on Exod. xxxiii. 3.

saved them] out of their adversity, Judg. ii. 15, 16, 18; Jer. xiv. 8, 9.—*In His love* (Jer. xxxi. 3) *and in His pity* (*s. w. a.* Gen. xix. 16) *He* **Himself** *redeemed them;* from the hand of the *adversary* (Ps. cvii. 1).—*He carried them;* or, "raised them on high;" *s. w. a.* Ps. xxviii. 9.

10. *vexed...*] as the antediluvians had done (Gen. vi. 6; *s. w.*).—*He* **Himself** *fought against them:* cp. xxix. 2, 3; Judg. ii. 15 (Rev. ii. 16).

turned to be their enemy, *and* he fought against them.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, *and* his people, *saying*, Where *is* he that [f] brought them up out of the sea with the [l] shepherd of his flock? where *is* he that put his holy Spirit within him?

12 That led *them* by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, [g] dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

13 That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, *that* they should not stumble?

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

15 ¶ [h] Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where *is* thy zeal and thy strength, [l] the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

16 Doubtless thou *art* our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, *art* our father, [l] our redeemer; [m] from everlasting *is* thy name.

f Exod. 14. 30. l Or, *shepherds*, as Psal. 77. 20.

g Exod. 14. 21. Josh. 3. 16.

h Deut. 26. 15.

l Or, *the multitude.*

l Or, *our redeemer* m *from everlasting* is *thy name.*

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11. **But** *he remembered*] As, after He had fought against the old world, He "remembered" Noah (Gen. viii. 1; cp. xix. 29; Exod. ii. 24, xxxii. 13; Lev. xxvi. 45; Ps. lxxviii. 39).—*The days of old, Moses* and *His people* (*v.* 8):—the conjunction omitted, as in xxvii. 4, Hab. iii. 11. So Targ., Vulg., A. Ezra. Others (Rashi, Saadias, Gesen., Del.) adopt what, but for such authority, would have appeared to be an utterly untenable rendering: "Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses."

saying, *Where*,...] It is better to omit the word, "saying," and put a full stop at, "people." The whole of the appeal which follows (down to the end of ch. lxiv) is to be looked upon as made by the *prophet* in the people's name. This is confirmed by a comparison of *v.* 15, Jer. ii. 6.—God had "remembered the days of old," when Moses pleaded not in vain for the people. The prophet seizes the opportunity, and starts forward, as one of God's "remembrancers" (lxii. 6), to enforce the questions which that memory suggested (cp. li. 9). He pleads, as Moses of old had pleaded, that Israel was *God's people* (Exod. xxxii. 11, 12, xxxiii. 13, 16), and that His honour was concerned in their deliverance (ib. xxxii. 12).

that brought them up (Jer. ii. 6) *out of the sea*; as out of the jaws of death (Ezek. xxxvii. 12, 13, *s. w.*). *With the Shepherd of His flock*;—the "Shepherd of Israel," who was *the Angel of God's presence* (Ps. lxxx. 1, 3; cp. Gen. xlviii. 15, 16; Heb. xiii. 20). *That* **placed** *in the midst of him* (the people) *His Holy Spirit* (Neh. ix. 20; Hag. ii. 5).

12. *That led* them *by*...] Rather, *That* **made** *His glorious arm* **to march at the** *right hand of.* A. Ezra rightly takes the "*Arm* of the Lord" to be His Angel;—the great Angel of the Covenant. Cp. on xl. 10, liii. 1.—*An everlasting name*; Exod. iii. 15; cp. 2 S. vii. 23.

13. *That* **made** *them* **to march** *through the* **deeps** (Exod. xv. 5—8). Cp. Ps. cvi. 9. *In the wilderness*;—the open down.

14. *As* **cattle that go down** *into the valley*, exchanging the bare hill-sides for rich meadows, *the Spirit of the Lord* (cp. Ps. cxliii. 10) **brought them to rest** (*s. w. a.* Exod. xxxiii. 14);—in Canaan (Deut. xii. 9).

so didst thou...] This "so" is not the correlative of "as" at the beginning of the verse; but refers to the whole of the preceding description: "*Such* was Thy wondrous love to them of old!" This forms the basis of the supplication which follows.

15. *Look down* (or, have regard)...*behold*] The words are the same as in Ps. lxxx. 14; where it is added, "and visit *this vine*;"—the condemned vine of ch. v. 5—7. *The habitation*; *s. w. a.* 1 K. viii. 13 (of Solomon's temple). They now turn to the heavenly temple (lxvi. 1, 2).

Where are Thy **jealousy** (lix. 17) *and Thy* **mighty deeds** (Ps. cxlv. 4, 12)? *the sounding of Thy bowels* (ch. xvi. 11) *and Thy* **compassions? Towards me they have** *restrained* **themselves** (xlii. 14, lxiv. 12). So Vulg. rightly.—Doubtless the Compassionate One is *in Himself* unchanged; but His attribute of mercy has, *in respect of me*, deliberately put a check on itself:—as Joseph "refrained himself," forcibly repressing his feelings towards his erring brethren (Gen. xliii. 31, xlv. 1, *s. w.*).—The word which is here (and generally) rendered "compassions" is the one used in Gen. xliii. 30, "his *bowels* did yearn upon his brother."

Obs. So He, who is seated at the right hand of God, "refrains Himself" towards His brethren after the flesh, until His discipline shall have brought them to true penitence.

16. *Doubtless*...] **For** *Thou art our Father.* This is the ground of the appeal which they had made to Him for help, and of their as-

deemer; thy name *is* from everlasting.

17 ¶ O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, *and* hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

18 The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

19 We are *thine:* thou never barest rule over them; ‖ they were not called by thy name.

‖ Or, *thy name was not called upon them.*

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surance that He really yearns over them.—This verse and lxiv. 8 are the only places in the O. T. where the address, "our Father," is used in prayer. In Jer. iii. 4 we have a near approach to it. The "spirit of adoption" was not yet given (Gal. iv. 4—6).

though...] **for** *Abraham* **is** *ignorant of us, and Isaac* **taketh no knowledge of us** (*s. w. a.* Ruth ii. 10, 19). Their national privileges had proved of no avail; they confess themselves "fatherless;" and God has ever had a father's care for the orphan (Hos. xiv. 3).

Obs. Most surprising is it, after this, to find the Targum paraphrase lxiv. 4 (A. V. 5) thus: "On account of the works of our righteous fathers we have been saved."

our redeemer] The accents place the semicolon after, "Father," and read (cp. marg.); **Thy name is, our Redeemer from the beginning** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 19); cp. Jer. ii. 20. For the construction, cp. xlviii. 8.

17. *why* **dost** *thou* **lead** *us* **astray** (*s. w. a.* xxx. 28) *from thy ways* (lxiv. 5)]—Thy appointed ways of grace and peace.—Really, *they* had wandered from His ways (liii. 6; Ps. xcv. 10); and He had blinded them, in order that He might lead them back "by a way they knew not" (xlii. 16).—*And* **hardenest** (Job xxxix. 16) *our heart* **that it hath no fear of Thee** (cp. xxix. 13).—Reverential fear springs from the sense of divine goodness (Ps. cxxx. 4); and He had hidden away His loving presence. It was hard, icy, winter with them, because the Sun had withdrawn.

Return] Ps. xc. 13, lxxx. 14.

for thy servants' sake] On their behalf (xliii. 14, xlv. 4).—For the sake of the faithful remnant and to avenge their wrongs (Deut. xxxii. 43), remove their reproach (Ps. lxxxix. 50) and shew them Thy work (Ps. xc. 16).

of thine inheritance (Ps. lxxiv. 2)] chosen to be thy special possession (Deut. xxxii. 9).

18. *The people of thy holiness*] **Thy holy people** (lxii. 12). Cp. on lxi. 6.

have possessed it] *have* **held possession.**

trodden down] *s. w. a.* Jer. xii. 10 (only). "Many pastors" (ib.) had first trodden it down by their profaneness.

19. *We are thine: thou...*] (So Targ.) Rather, *We are* (or, are become) **as men over whom from the beginning** (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 16, lxiv. 4, H. 5) *Thou* **hast not borne** *rule:* **upon whom** *Thy name* **has not been** *called.* So A. Ezra and Rashi (and, in substance, the LXX. and Vulg.; "We are become as of old, when Thou ruledst not over us..."). Israel had been (Ps. cxiv. 2) "God's dominion" (*s. w.*), under His direct rule and government (cp. Deut. xxviii. 9, 10); now all the bonds of national unity were gone (cp. Hos. iii. 4). Cp. lxv. 15.

The confession (made by the prophet in the people's name) here reaches its lowest depth of grief. The eye turns upward in self-despairing anguish, and the prayer bursts forth: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens!"—This exclamation (lxiv. 1 of A. V.) stands in the Hebrew (and in the Targ.) as the second member of lxiii. 19:—with very striking effect, certainly; yet the connexion between it and the two following verses (lxiv. 2, 3 of A. V.) is in favour of the division made by the versions (LXX., Syr., Vulg. &c.). In either case, however, the pause between the chapters should be very slight.

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 7.)

[The reference-numbers are as in the Hebrew.]

Isai. lxiii.	cp. Ps. lxxx.	Isai. lxiv.	cp. Ps. lxxx.
9. פניו (lxiv. 6)	4, 8, 20.	4. ונושע	4, 8, 20
11. רעה צאנו	2	6. "calleth...Name"	19
15. "Look down, &c."	15	10. "burned...fire"	17
17. "Return"	15		

NOTE B. (ON *v.* 9.)

1. It should be observed that even if the Keri were adopted, the sense assigned to it (resembling what is said in Judg. x. 16) can scarcely be educed from it. For the mean-

ing of צָר לְ is not simply, "(He) is grieved," but, "(He) is reduced to a strait," is ἐν ἀπορίᾳ: —which, of course, is not suitable here.

2. The Kethiv has been taken by some (Saadias, &c.) to mean; "In all their trouble was not *distress;*" cp. 2 Cor. iv. 8. But to this there are two objections: (*a*) we should have required לָהֶם to follow; (*b*) the suffix in מִנִּיו is not accounted for.

3. The rendering "He was no adversary" (*s. w. a.* lix. 19), Theodot. οὐ πολιορκητής, has several convergent reasons in its favour. (*a*) It preserves the continuity of the subject of *v.* 8: "He became to them (לָהֶם) a *Saviour*. In all their adversity He was *no adversary;* but the angel of His presence *saved them.*" This meets the objection of Knob. and Del.; who urge the absence of לָהֶם after צר. (*b*) In Exod. xxiii. 20—23 it is promised that in case of Israel's obedience *the* LORD, acting by *His angel*, will be an *adversary* (וְצַרְתִּי) to their adversaries. (*c*) In Num. x. 9, we have the noun צר and the verb נוּשַׁע in antithesis. (*d*) In Lam. ii. 4 we read: "He (the LORD) stood with His right hand *as an adversary* (כְּצָר);" as though He had identified Himself with the adversaries, into whose hand *helpless* Jerusalem fell (i. 7: cp. i. 5, 10, iv. 12). This is of considerable weight, since there are several references in 'Lamentations' to these chh. of Isaiah. Note especially the חַסְדֵי יי of iii. 22, and רב חסדיו of iii. 32.

CHAPTER LXIV.

1 *The church prayeth for the illustration of God's power.* 5 *Celebrating God's mercy, it maketh confession of their natural corruptions.* 9 *It complaineth of their affliction.*

OH that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

2 As *when* † the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence!

† Heb. *the fire of meltings.*

3 When thou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

CHAP. LXIV. He, who had descended on Sinai, and taken up His abode in Israel, concealed the symbols of His Presence, the cherubim, behind a veil. That veil was once a year drawn aside to allow of atonement being made for the people's sins. But now God had retired from Israel, and hidden away His face behind a cloud of wrathful indignation. Could *that* veil ever be withdrawn?—The prophet, in the Church's name, prays that it may be.

1. *rend the heavens*] As a garment is rent, xxxvi. 22 (*s. w.*); where it is observable that the LXX. has ἐσχισμένοι:—the word used in Mark i. 10, *of the heavens being cloven asunder* at our Lord's baptism (cp. on lxi. 1), and in Matt. xxvii. 51, Mark xv. 38, *of the veil of the temple being rent* at His death.—Here the LXX. has ἀνοίξῃς (*s. w. a.* Matt. iii. 16; Luke iii. 21).

wouldest come down] *s. w. a.* Exod. iii. 8, xix. 11, 18, 20. The covenant given at Sinai had failed. How could the "Covenant of Peace" (liv. 10) be established, unless He should be pleased again to descend on earth? (Cp. John iii. 13; Eph. iv. 9, 10, and note on ch. lv. 11.)

that the mountains might flow down] (*v.* 3). So Vulg. (and Stier). LXX., Targ., and most moderns, "might quake." (In Judg. v. 5 the LXX. has ἐσαλεύθησαν.) The parallel clause in *v.* 2 seems to shew that the nations themselves were the "mountains" referred to; cp. Matt. xxi. 21; Heb. xi. 27. So Forerius and Schmieder.

2. *melting*] The Hebrew word occurs here only. Nearly all moderns follow Saadias and Abulwalid in rendering it "brushwood" (as in Arabic). The clause, "to make known Thy name," is supposed by most to depend on *v.* 1, "that Thou wouldst descend...to make known."—It might be simpler to put a full stop at the end of *v.* 1, and suppose an ellipsis like that of Ps. lxx. 1 (indicative of strong feeling): "As when fire of brushwood burneth (*s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 22), as when fire causeth water to boil, (oh, hasten) to make... adversaries: **let the** *nations*...." Even God's own people had forgotten His NAME (*v.* 7);—His character manifested in historical acts and in the teaching of the Law. Oh that a new revelation of it might take place, which should spread like a swift flame and set the nations in vehement commotion! Oh that it were even now kindled! (Cp. Luke xii. 49.)

may tremble] With religious awe, Ps. xcix. 1, *s. w.* (cp. Heb. xii. 28, 29).

3. The eye of faith can see its desire already accomplished. **Whilst** *Thou didst terrible things* (*s. w. a.* Exod. xxxiv. 10; 2 S. vii. 23), *which we looked not for*,—transcending both in mercy and in judgment all that we had anticipated,—

thou camest down] to work out the promised salvation (*v.* 1).

4 For since the beginning of the world [a] *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye [‖] seen, O God, beside thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, *those that* remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do [b] fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7 And *there is* none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast [†] consumed us, because of our iniquities.

8 But now, O LORD, thou *art* our father; we *are* the clay, and thou our potter; and we all *are* the work of thy hand.

9 ¶ Be not [c] wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we *are* all thy people.

[a] Psalm 31. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 9.
[‖] Or, *seen a God beside thee*, which *doeth so for him*, &c.
[†] Heb. *melted.*
[b] Psalm 90. 5, 6.
[c] Psalm 79. 8.

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4. An expansion of the, "looked not for," of *v.* 3. This divine interposition, and its issues, went beyond all that men had thought possible:—for no experience had ever testified of such things.

For since...perceived by the ear] Or, **And from the beginning** (*s. w. a.* lxiii. 16, 19) **they** *have not heard*, **they have not given ear** (*s. w. a.* 2 Chro. xxiv. 19; Neh. ix. 30). The second verb seems never to be used of mere passive "perception," but uniformly of *paying attention to* what has met the ear. The two verbs have occurred together in like manner in i. 10, xxxii. 9, xlii. 23, li. 4. Not only were the things such as men in general had never heard of (lii. 15): they were so wonderful that Israel, to whom they were in various ways communicated, would not yield them audience. (Cp. Deut. xxix. 4; John vi. 60.)

Obs. In 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, St Paul refers to this passage as having been verified in the fact that, when "the Lord of glory" came to redeem mankind, "none of the princes of this world recognized" Him.—In his quotation he joins words taken from ch. lxv. 16, 17 (LXX.) to portions of the present verse.

neither...seen, O God...] Many (after the LXX., Targ., Kimchi, etc.) render (as in marg.): "*neither...seen a God beside Thee* (cp. 2 S. vii. 22; ch. xlv. 21), *which doeth so...*" The A. V. is supported in the use of the vocative by the Vulg., Rashi, Vitr., &c.; and apparently by the Masoretes, who place a pause at "seen." This latter view appears to harmonize best with the preceding verse, which speaks of God's doing what had never been anticipated. The meaning, then, will be:—**Eye hath not seen** (no eye, of men or of angels, however eagle-like its keenness of vision, Job xxviii. 7),—(none) *O God, beside thee* (hath seen), **what He will do** (2 S. vii. 25) *for him that waiteth* (*s. w. a.* viii. 17) *for Him.* In old times (Deut. iv. 32—39) God made His voice to be heard on Sinai, and gave the people visible proof of His mighty power (ib. iv. 9, x. 21); but in the coming period of Redemption He would perform a work incomparably more wondrous.

5. *Thou meetest*—with gracious welcome (Gen. xxxii. 1)—*him that rejoiceth*, in Thee, lxi. 10 (so A. Ezra), *and worketh righteousness:* cp. lvi. 1; Acts x. 35.

in thy ways] lviii. 2, lxiii. 17.

behold, Thou—gracious as Thou art—**wast** *wroth*, **and we were guilty** (Gen. xliv. 32, *s. w.*): *in those* (in Thy ways, cp. the pronoun in xxxviii. 16) *is continuance*;—unbroken continuity of mercy for the penitent; for they are "everlasting ways" (Ps. cxxxix. 24; Jer. vi. 16, xviii. 15, *s. w.*).

6. *we are all* (lii. 6) **become** *as an unclean* thing] Or, "as the unclean" (*s. w. a.* xxxv. 8, lii. 1): Vulg. *immundus*:—excluded, therefore, from the congregation (Lev. xiii. 45, 46). Cp. on vi. 5 (*s. w.*).

our righteousnesses] Or, *our* **righteous deeds** (*s. w. a.* Dan. ix. 18).

filthy rags] Lit. "a menstruous garment." Lam. i. 17. Cp. Phil. iii. 6—8.

do fade] Or, **are withered** (i. 30, *s. w.*).

7. They were like men in a lethargy; unable to "lay hold" (xxvii. 5, lvi. 2, *s. w.*) of God's covenant.

consumed us, because] Or, "made us to melt away by the means of." Others; "melted us away into the power of" (cp. Job viii. 4).

8. They now surrender themselves entirely to be moulded by that Wisdom which once they slighted (xxix. 16).

9. *wroth very sore*] (cp. *v.* 12):—the last words of the Book of Lamentations.

remember iniquity] Hos. viii. 13, ix. 9.

see, we beseech thee] Or, "have regard, now;" *s. w. a.* lxiii. 15.

10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

11 Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

12 Wilt thou refrain thyself for these *things*, O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

CHAPTER LXV.

1 *The calling of the Gentiles.* 2 *The Jews, for their incredulity, idolatry, and hypocrisy, are rejected.* 8 *A remnant shall be saved.* 11 *Judgments on the wicked, and blessings on the godly.* 17 *The blessed state of the new Jerusalem.*

I [a]AM sought of *them that* asked not *for me;* I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* was not called by my name.

[a] Rom. 9. 24, 25, 26. & 10. 20. Eph. 2. 12.

2 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way *that was* not good, after their own thoughts;

3 A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that

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10. *are...is*] Or, "are become...is become." LXX. ἐγενήθη. Vulg. "facta est."

11. *Our holy and our beautiful* (or, glorious) *house*] which we held as a pledge that "Thy holiness and glory" (lxiii. 15, *s. ww.*) were with us,

is burned up...] Lit. "hath been for burning (ix. 5, H. 4) *s. ww.*) of fire."

our pleasant things] *s. w. t.* 2 Chro. xxxvi. 19; Lam. i. 10, ii. 4.

12. *Wilt Thou* **notwithstanding** *these things refrain Thyself* (xlii. 14, lxiii. 15, *s. w.*)? *Hold Thy peace* (xlii. 14). *Very sore.* See on *v.* 9.

CHAP. LXV. In the last two chapters the prophet, pleading in Israel's name, had remonstrated with God for His long *silence* (lxiv. 12). They were all *His* people (ib. 9); yet their land was desolate, and their city in ruins. The answer to this appeal is now given. His goodness was free and bounteous as ever. It had even overflowed on those who had been strangers to Him (*v.* 1). But Israel had rejected His long and earnest appeals; therefore He must now bid mercy to be silent, and allow justice to speak (*v.* 6). The "rebellious people" should be "slain," and God's servants called "by another name" (*v.* 15); while "a new heaven and a new earth" should be created, in which "the former things," and all their troubles, should be forgotten (*vv.* 16, 17).

1. *I am sought*] Or, "I have been inquired of" (*s. w. a.* Ezek. xiv. 3, xx. 3, 31); more exactly, "I have let Myself be inquired of:" so that the LXX. were justified in using ἀποκριθήσομαι in Ezekiel, and ἐμφανὴς ἐγενήθην here. (Cp. Rom. x. 20, where the order of the clauses is changed.)

that asked not] counsel; *s. w. a.* Hos. iv. 12.

I am found] Or, "I have let Myself be found;"—have made Myself accessible.

Behold me] Or, **Here am I** (lii. 6, lviii. 9).

a nation that was not called by my name] as Israel had been; cp. lxiii. 19. Others (after LXX. and Vulg.); "where My name was not invoked."

The "nation" here, as contrasted with the "people" of *v.* 2, plainly represents the Gentiles (cp. Matt. xxi. 43): as R. Moses Hakkohen is reported by A. Ezra to have taken it. For, (1) the word is, unquestionably, so used in lv. 5. (2) In Deut. xxxii. 21 (which is referred to in *v.* 3) "nation" stands thus contrasted with "people."—There are also references to Deut. xxxii in *vv.* 5, 6. (3) Israel *had*, professedly, "asked counsel" of Him and "sought" Him (lviii. 2); and, as a people, was called by God's name.

Obs. The passage of Deuteronomy just referred to is quoted by St Paul immediately before his quotation of *v.* 2, in Rom. x. 19, 20.

2. *a rebellious people*] Cp. *i.* 4 and notes on i. 23, xxx. 1. To them Divine Wisdom had long *spread out* her *hands* in vain (Prov. i. 24, *s. w.*:—again referred to in *v.* 12, and lxvi. 4).

in a way that was *not good*] Or, *in* **the way that is** *not good;* which is the very opposite of good (*s. w. a.* Ps. xxxvi. 4).

3. *A people...*] Rather, **This** *people*, **who provoke** *Me* (Deut. xxxii. 21; 2 Chro. xxxiv. 25) *continually to My face;*—affronting Him openly (Job i. 11), while the house, where His Presence resided, was yet standing among them.

that sacrificeth in gardens (i. 29, lxvi. 17)] —retaining the awful rite which testifies of man's guilt; but obliterating its true character by surrounding it with all that was bright and joyous in nature:—as if by their self-invented rites they had re-opened paradise.

burneth incense upon **bricks**] — altars of brick; erected "on the mountains" (*v.* 7; 2 K. xvi. 4; Hos. iv. 13); or on roofs

sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense † upon altars of brick;

† Heb. *upon bricks.*

4 Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and ‖ broth of abominable *things is in* their vessels;

‖ Or, *pieces.*

5 Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are* a smoke in my ‖ nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

‖ Or, *anger.*

6 Behold, *it is* written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

7 Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

8 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing *is* in it: so will I do for my

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of houses (Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29): the appointed place being "the roof" of that golden altar (Exod. xxx. 3), which was hidden away in the sanctuary,—on which the high-priest was daily to burn incense (ib. 7, 8)—which was ceremonially cleansed every year on the Day of Atonement (ib. 10). Thus the altar-incense represented the fragrance of Israel's self-devotion, reverentially offered in God's own appointed way, by ministers of His own constituting, and under the protection of the great Atonement. The popular incense-burning, in contrast to all this, told men that they might go forth and offer their own unauthorized will-worship, boldly, in their own name, in the face of the universe and of God Himself.

4. *Which remain...*] Or, "That sit in tombs;" for purposes of necromancy (viii. 19, 20).

and lodge in the monuments] Or (LXX.), "in caverns;"—probably, crypts or subterranean chapels, in which they hoped to have dreams of a supernatural kind (Jerome).

swine's flesh] (lxvi. 17)—which was legally unclean (Lev. xi. 7); but enjoined in some heathen lustrations (as the *su-ovi-taurilia*). Antiochus employed it as his test of Judaism (1 Macc. i. 41—64; cp. 2 Macc. vi. 18).

abominable] (meat); Ezek. iv. 14, *s. w.*

5. *I am holier than thou*] A deep insight is here given us into the nature of the mysterious fascination, which heathenism exercised on the Jewish people. The Law humbled them at every turn with mementoes of their own sin and of God's unapproachable holiness. Paganism freed them from this; and allowed them (in the midst of moral pollution) to cherish lofty pretensions to sanctity. The man, who had been offering incense on the mountain-top, *despised* the penitent who went to the temple to present "a broken and contrite heart."—If Pharisaism led to a like result, it was because it, too, had emptied the Law of its spiritual import, and turned its provisions into intellectual *idols*

a smoke in my nose] (cp. Ps. xviii. 8). Instead of an acceptable fragrance, they send forth offensive smoke; for they have the wrath of God (as a "burning fire," *s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 22) perpetually abiding on them.

6. *written*] in the Law generally (Deut. xxix. 20, 21): but especially in the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 35, 41 (cp. on *v.* 15 below).

not keep silence] Cp. Ps. l. 3.

but will recompense]...(lix. 18). Or, "until I have recompensed, yea, recompensed."

into their bosom] in requital of the iniquity, which they had "hid" in it (Job xxxi. 33).

7. There should be a full stop at the end of *v.* 6; the clause, *Your* **own** *iniquities*, &c., standing, with great emphasis, absolutely.

saith the LORD] The frequency, with which this formula (or its equivalent) recurs in this and the next chapter, is remarkable: see *vv.* 8, 13, 25, lxvi. 1, 2, 9, 12, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23.

which have] Or, "for that they have."

blasphemed me] Resorting to idols, as though I were negligent or powerless.

measure their former work] Or, *measure their* **reward first of all** (cp. Jer. xvi. 18, *s. w.*). The "first of all" prepares the way (Del.) for the brighter side of the message in *v.* 8.

8. *As the new wine...and one saith*] Or, *As, when new wine..., one saith.*

Destroy it not] Both the second member of the verse and *v.* 9 imply that this refers not simply to the cluster, but to it and the branch on which it grows. The vine-dresser, as he is about to cut down a degenerate vine, espies a full rich cluster on one part, and gives orders that the plant shall not be wholly *destroyed* (Luther, Marloratus); so shall it be now with the vines of Jacob and Judah (*v.* 9).—The denunciations in *vv.* 2—7 (cp. *v.* 15, and lxiv. 6, 7) appeared to include the *whole people.* But it was not so: there should still be a holy "seed" (*vv.* 9, 23; cp. vi. 13;

servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

10 And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

11 ¶ But ye *are* they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that ‖ Or, *Gad.* ‖ troop, and that furnish the drink of- ‖ Or, *Meni.* fering unto that ‖ number.

12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: [b] because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose *that* wherein I delighted not.

[b] Prov. 1. 24, &c. chap. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13.

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for † vexation of spirit. † Heb. *breaking.*

15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

16 That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth

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Rom. xi. 5), to transmit the power imprinted on Abraham by that creative word, *Be thou a blessing* (Gen. xii. 1). Cp. xix. 24. The Targ. paraphrases: "As Noah was found righteous in the age of the Deluge, and I said that I would not destroy him, to the intent I might raise up the world by him; so, &c."

9. *bring forth a seed*] sprung from Jacob, yet discriminated from the mass of the nation; the seed of God's *elect Servant* (liii. 10):—whence they also are called, *Mine elect* ones, *My servants.*

10. The whole land shall be in peace; from Sharon (xxxiii. 9) in the west, to the valley of Achor (Josh. vii. 24; Hos. ii. 15) in the east.

11. *But ye* are *they that*...(*v.* 12) *Therefore will I*...] Better, *But* as for you that ...(*v.* 12) I will even...

forsake the, LORD] i. 4, *s. w.*

that prepare...] Rather, *that* set in order (Exod. xl. 4) *a table for* Fortune:—Hebr. GAD; the name of a heathen deity (cp. Josh. xi. 17, xii. 7; and the note on Gen. xxx. 11), for whom they prepared viands (cp. Jer. vii. 18). LXX. τῷ δαιμονίῳ: Vulg. "Fortunæ."

that furnish...] Or, *that* fill up spiced drink *for* Destiny:—Hebr. MENI (*apportionment*, or "numbering"); to whom they poured out a drink-offering (cp. Jer. xliv. 17). LXX. τῇ τύχῃ.

12. In allusion to the name "Meni" the sentence is issued; I will even *apportion* (or, number, Jer. xxxiii. 13) *you to the sword.*

bow down] x. 4, *s. w.*

I called] See on *v.* 2:

did choose that wherein I had no pleasure] The contrast of lvi. 5 (*s. w.*).

13. *shall be hungry*] Cp. iii. 1, viii. 21, lv. 1. *Ashamed:* i. 29, lxvi. 5.

14. *vexation of spirit*] Lit. "breach (or, breaking down) of spirit;" yet they will not bring to God an inwardly "broken spirit" (Ps. li. 7, *s. ww.*).

15. *for a curse*] Lit. "an oath;" *s. w. a.* in the formula, with which the priest was to administer the water of jealousy; "the Lord make thee for a curse and *for an oath* (*s. w.*) among thy people." So would it be with unfaithful Israel (lvii. 8), when the "jealousy" of the Lord should "smoke against" them (Deut. xxix. 20). Cp. on *v.* 16.

Obs. In Num. v. 23 the priest was directed to "write these curses in a book." The same words are used in Deut. xxix. 20, 21, 27 (H. 19, 20, 26), respecting the curses which were recorded by Moses (cp. *v.* 6 above) against the national infidelity.

shall slay thee] *s. w. a.* xi. 4, xiv. 30 (A. V. "kill"); Hos. ii. 3 (H. 5): "and slay her (unfaithful Israel) with thirst."

another name]—not taken from Jacob or Judah (*v.* 9), but from God Himself (Amos ix. 12). LXX. ὄνομα καινόν, identifying it with the "new name" of lxii. 2.

16. *That*] So that (Gen. xiii. 16, *s. w.*).

shall bless himself] in God;—no longer in the imagination of his heart, Deut. xxix. 19.

the God of truth] A remarkable expression; lit. "the God of AMEN,"—of what is *firm and true.* Vulg. "in Deo Amen." The Targ. points in the right direction when it para-

in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

17 ¶ For, behold, I create [c] new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor [†] come into mind.

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the [d] voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the

[c] chap. 66. 22. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1.

[†] Heb. *come upon the heart.*

[d] Rev. 21. 4.

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phrases, "the God of the covenant;" for AMEN was the word by which the assembled people on entering Canaan gave their formal assent to the conditions of God's covenant (Deut. xxvii. 14—26; Josh. viii. 33, 34). The God, to whom that quality of covenant-keeping truth essentially belongs, is He in whom all shall "bless themselves."—A comparison of Gen. xxii. 18 and Ps. lxxii. 17 with the present verse shews that "the Seed of Abraham" and the "Son of David" are to be identified with this God of truth:—a mystery completely realized in Him Who is "the AMEN, the Faithful and True Witness" (Rev. iii. 14; cp. xix. 11). In Him "all the promises of God are... Amen" (2 Cor. i. 20). In His Person God and man were joined in an immutable covenant of peace. To the curse pronounced on every one that violates God's law, He said "Amen" upon the cross. To the blessing guaranteed to all nations by God's promises to Abraham and David, He said "Amen," when He rose from the dead to "live for evermore" (Rev. i. 18).

The LXX. has τὸν Θεὸν τὸν ἀληθινόν: cp. 1 John v. 20.

shall swear by...] For God's adherence to His promise will be recognized by all as the perfect ideal of faithfulness.

the former troubles] The sorrows which sin brought on Israel—on mankind—during the earlier dispensations, are *forgotten* (cp. liv. 4); —because, under the New Covenant, their *sins* shall not be remembered (Jer. xxxi. 34).

hidden away *from mine eyes*] therefore, never to recur; non-existent (Micah vii. 19).

17. The old troublous world has been dissolved (xxiv. 19, 20); but out of that waste "void" God's creative power shall raise a new and better order of things. (Cp. xli. 20, xlii. 9, xliii. 19, lvii. 19.)

new heavens and a new earth] It is evident from *v.* 19 that the work of renovation will be a gradual one. The germ of the kingdom of God—righteousness—is planted in earth and heaven (li. 16) by Messiah (2 Cor. v. 17) at His first advent; to be brought to full maturity at His second (2 Pet. iii. 13).

the former] Or, "the former things," cp. xliii. 18. *Come into mind: s. w. a.* Jer. iii. 16.

18. *I create Jerusalem...*] It will be a new creation; yet there will be continuity between the old and the new: as the identity of name implies (Cp. Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xxi. 2.)

19. *I will rejoice...*] *s. w. a.* Deut. xxx. 9. Cp. lxii. 5.

voice of weeping...voice of crying] Carrying us back to the words of consolation uttered during the Assyrian troubles: "Thou shalt weep no more; He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy crying (*s. v.*); when He heard, He answered" (cp. *v.* 24 below).

20—23. As in *v.* 19, so here, we have correctives of the "old troubles." Hezekiah was removed before he had "filled up" his days. The Chaldeans were soon to accomplish what had been threatened in Deut. xxviii. 30, 33, 51: "Thou shalt *build a house*, and *not dwell therein*; thou shalt *plant a vineyard*, and *not gather the grapes* thereof;" and in Lev. xxvi. 16—20, "I will appoint over you *terror* (*s. w. a.* here in *v.* 23, "trouble");...and ye shall sow your seed *in vain* (*s. w. a.* in *v.* 23); ...and your strength shall be spent *in vain*" (*s. v.*). Not so should it be in the spiritual Jerusalem:—no premature removal thence; none defrauded there of his reward; no labour there spent in vain.

20. *an infant of days, nor*] This division is against the accents. Translate: *There shall no more* (lxii. 4) *be an from thence* **infant of days or old man**, *that shall not have* **fulfilled** (Exod. xxiii. 26) *his days.* The little child shall be reckoned fit for the kingdom of heaven; so that early death shall be no bar to the enjoyment of the full covenant blessing. The inheritance shall be assured to him, no less than it was to Abraham, who received the seal of faith when he was "a hundred years old" (Gen. xvii. 17, *s. ww.*). To shew yet further that "honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time" (Wisd. of Sol. iv. 8), it is added that *a sinner, being a hundred years old*, and so, outwardly blest with "length of days," shall have no part nor lot in the great inheritance; he *shall be cursed* of God; and "they that are cursed of Him shall be *cut off*" (Ps. xxxvii. 22), and not "come into His righteousness" (Ps. lxix. 27).

child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them;* and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and † Heb. *shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out.* mine elect † shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

24 And it shall come to pass, that [e] before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. [e] Psal. 32. 5.

25 The [f] wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD. [f] chap. 11. 6, 7.

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22. *as the days of a tree*] which may flourish undisturbed in its home on Lebanon, in spite of storms, for 1000 years; realizing to the full its Creator's design respecting it. The LXX. and Targ. both have, "of the Tree of Life."

shall long enjoy] Lit. "shall wear out:" as one does who has the whole use and benefit of a thing.

the work of their hands] which God has made effectual, Ps. xc. 17 (*s. w.*).

23. *labour in vain*] as was the case under the old dispensation; *s. ww. a.* xlix. 4. LXX. κοπιάσουσιν εἰς κένον (*s. www. a.* Phil. ii. 16; cp. 1 Cor. xv. 58).

for trouble] Or, "for terror" (Lev. xxvi. 16, *s. w.*);—to have their progeny overtaken by judgments, like that which fell on Israel in the desert (Ps. lxxviii. 33, *s. w.*).

with them] Or, "are with them;"—not removed from them, but growing up before their eyes (cp. Job xxi. 8), and sharing in their privileges.

24. *before they call*] While the prayer is yet only taking form in their hearts.

yet speaking] Literally so in Daniel's case (Dan. ix. 20—23).

25. Clauses 1, 2, and 4, are nearly as in xi. 6, 7, 9 (Note A). The third clause is additional, *and* **as for the serpent,** *dust shall be* **his food.** The full weight of the primeval curse shall rest upon him;—typifying the humiliation which is in store for the enemies of the Righteous King (Ps. lxxii. 9).

NOTE A. (ON *v.* 25.)

There is a verbal variation on which some stress has been laid;—instead of יחדו, "together" (xi. 6), we have here כאחד, "as one." It has been suggested that the second of these was a later form, being found only in Ecclesiastes, Ezra, and Nehemiah. But (1) יחדו also occurs three times in Nehemiah (iv. 2, vi. 2, 7); nearly, but not quite, in the sense of כאחד: (2) כאיש אחד also occurs in Ezra iii. 1, Neh. viii. 1; yet that is certainly not a late form (see 1 S. xi. 7, etc.); (3) כאחד is a perfectly simple and natural Hebrew form, expressing more than "together;"—that they are "as one;" one in mind, will, or act.

CHAPTER LXVI.

1 The glorious God will be served in humble sincerity. 5 He comforteth the humble with the marvellous generation, 10 and with the gracious benefits of the church. 15 God's severe judgments against the wicked. 19 The Gentiles shall have an holy church, 24 and see the damnation of the wicked.

CHAP. LXVI. In lxv. 17 it was said, that in the "new heavens and new earth" the "former things" should be forgotten. Among those former things Jeremiah pointedly includes "the ark of the covenant" (iii. 16) and the custom of calling Jerusalem "the throne of the Lord;"—in this, as in many other passages, almost *commenting* upon Isaiah. —But if the temple and its ark are to pass away, what are to be their substitutes? He, who had seen that glorious temple-vision, at the time when he received his special commission to Israel, could have no doubt how to reply to this inquiry. He now, without a vision, sets forth the illimitable grandeur of the Lord of Hosts, and at the same time His gracious condescension. Then he proceeds solemnly to denounce the fanaticism of the people; while in *v.* 6 we almost hear the crash of the second, and final, downfall of the temple, at the time when the Levitical dispensation itself came to an end; —not, however, before Zion had been won-

[a] 1 Kin. 8. 27. 2 Chron. 6. 18. Acts 7. 49. & 17. 24.

THUS saith the LORD, [a] The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

2 For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even* to *him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth [‖] a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that [†] burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

[‖] Or, *kid.*

[†] Heb. *maketh a memorial of.*

4 I also will choose their [‡] delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; [b] because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.

[‡] Or, *devices.*

[b] Prov. 1. 24. chap. 65. 12. Jer. 7. 13.

5 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast

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drously "delivered of a man-child" (*v.* 7), through whom she should have comfort and peace and "abundance of glory."

As the prophet's teaching has from the first gathered around *the house of the Lord;* so does that of the New Testament. *E.g.* (1) Our Lord Himself was condemned on a charge of having said that, the temple of God being destroyed, He would build it again in three days, Matt. xxvi. 61: (2) the speech of the first martyr (accused of speaking injurious words "against this holy place") reached its highest point in the quotation, *Heaven is My throne,* Acts vii. 48, 49: (3) the accusation brought against the great apostle of the Gentiles was, that he had profaned the temple (Acts xxi. 28).

1. *my throne*] Cp. on vi. 1.

my footstool] Cp. on lx. 13. As, therefore, the cherubim of glory corresponded to heaven, so did the mercy-seat to earth;—upon which the blood of the one Propitiatory Sacrifice was sprinkled, to purify it from the pollution of man's guilt.

where is...] The address is to those who indulged in simply worldly zeal for the "holy and glorious house" of their fathers (lxiv., 11). Let such consider;—If heaven be the throne of the Great King and earth His footstool, while heaven and earth make up the created universe, *where,* then, can *His palace* be?

that ye build] Or, "would build."

where...my rest?] Lit. "where is the place that is My resting-place?"—Where can it be, but in His own uncreated glory? Cp. on xi. 10, *s. w.*

2. *For all...*] Rather, **Even** *all* **these** (the whole Universe) **did** *My Hand* **make,** *and all* **these** (in consequence of My working) *came into being* (John i. 3);—how, then, can He need a temple built by "the art and device of man" (Acts xvii. 24—29; cp. 2 S. vii. 5—7)?

to **this** *will I look*] Or, "have regard:" *s. w. a.* lxiii. 15, lxiv. 9; where the petition, "Have regard!" rested on the plea that Israel was God's people. Here the true object of God's regard is described.

poor] Or, "lowly" (Zech. ix. 9, *s. w.*). Cp. lvii. 15.

trembleth at my word]—*v.* 5. Cp. Ezra ix. 4, x. 3; which appear to look back to this verse.

3. As for men who were devoid of these qualifications, their offerings were in the highest degree offensive.—The LXX. paraphrases: "But *the ungodly* that sacrificeth, &c."

is as if *he slew*] So LXX., Targ., Vulg., &c. The slaughter of an innocent animal cannot, of itself, be more pleasing to God than homicide. Lit. "slayeth a man."

cut off a dog's neck] seeking to procure expiation by means of an utterly unclean animal.

swine's blood] Cp. on lxv. 4.

burneth] Or (marg.), **maketh a memorial of** (Lev. ii. 2). *An idol:* so Vulg. Lit. "ungodliness," or "vanity."

Yea, they...] Or, **Truly,** *they...*;—in contrast with the, "I also," of *v.* 4.

their abominations] Deut. xxix. 17, H. 16.

4. *their delusions*] Their wayward, childish, follies; which in the end would mock them with grievous disappointment. See on iii. 4 (the only other place where the word occurs). LXX. ἐμπαίγματα. They in their policy would have it so: God in His providence allows it so to be.

bring their fears...] Or, "bring upon them the things which they fear" (Prov. x. 24, *s. w.*). So it was with that last generation of Jews (John xi. 48).

5. In this verse we appear to be brought down to New Testament times: when they, who clung to the temple, as the place where

you out for my name's sake, said,
c chap. 5. 19. c Let the LORD be glorified: but he
shall appear to your joy, and they
shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of noise from the city,
a voice from the temple, a voice of
the LORD that rendereth recompence
to his enemies.

* 7 Before she travailed, she brought
forth; before her pain came, she was
delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing?
who hath seen such things? Shall the
earth be made to bring forth in one
day? *or* shall a nation be born at
once? for as soon as Zion travailed,
she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and
not ‖ cause to bring forth? saith the ‖ Or, *beget.*
LORD: shall I cause to bring forth,
and shut *the womb?* saith thy God.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and
be glad with her, all ye that love her:
rejoice for joy with her, all ye that
mourn for her:

11 That ye may suck, and be sa-

God had "set His Name" (Jer. vii. 10, 11, 14), *hated* the lowly disciples of Christ (Matt. x. 22; John xv. 18, 19) and *cast* them *out* of their synagogues (Luke vi. 22; John ix. 22, xvi. 2);—for the verb rendered "cast out" is the one from which *nidduy*, "excommunication," is derived. The A. V. here departs twice from the Masoretic text: (1) in separating *for My name's sake* from *the Lord be glorified*; (2) in reading *He shall appear* (LXX., Kimchi, &c.) for "we shall look." The former of these changes has the support of the Vulg.; and of the great body of modern commentators. The Masoretic text is certainly difficult; yet it gives a good sense, if we take the words, "for My name's sake," to be (like the first words of Ps. xxii. 8, H. 9) a *quotation*, with which the persecutors wing their bitter arrow: "FOR MY NAME'S SAKE (that My glory be not polluted, xlviii. 9—11): so be it! *Let the Lord be glorious;* as you say He will be."—The latter of the two changes is most probably wrong. Translate, *Let the* LORD *be* **glorious** (Ezek. xxvii. 25, *s. w.*), **that we may look upon** *your joy, and they...*" The words are ironical (as in v. 19, *that we may see it, s. w.*); and refer back to lxv. 13 (as *v.* 4 plainly did to lxv. 12). —"We are told that our name is to become a curse (lxv. 15); and that the Lord's servants, who bear His new name (ib.), *shall rejoice*, but we *shall be ashamed* (ib. 13). It is a *heavy* and *grievous*, if glorious, message: but let it even come to pass; that we may look on YOUR joy, and THEY (the persons spoken of in lxv. 13) may be ashamed." The answer to their challenge will then be given, indirectly, by the solemn voices heard in *v.* 6. The Vulg. (with many moderns) separates the last clause: *But they...*

Obs. In xlviii. 9, the LXX. has ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἐμοῦ ὀνόματος (as in Luke xxi. 12: cp. ib. 17; Matt. xxiv. 9; John xv. 21; Acts v. 41).

6. Their mock petition is at once executed. *A voice of* **tumult**, as of battle (xiii. 4, *s. www.*; see on xvii. 12), is heard *from the city; a voice from the temple*, like that reported sound of persons marching out, and saying, "Let us depart hence" (Jos. 'B. J.' vi. 5).—This triple "voice" found a strangely tragic utterance from the lips of Jesus, the son of Ananus (ibid.); who, four years before the Roman siege, cried out in the temple and through the streets of Jerusalem; "A voice from the East, a voice from the West, a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the sanctuary, a voice against bridegrooms and brides, a voice against the whole people."

7. Yet before those throes came upon Zion, she had brought forth the Child, for whom ages had been waiting; the "*Man-child*," who was to "rule all nations" (Rev. xii. 5: cp. John xvi. 21). In Him mankind received a new birth. By His resurrection the Christian Church was "born in a day."—The Targ. has: "Before distress cometh upon her, she shall be redeemed: and, before trembling cometh upon her, as travail upon a woman with child, *her King shall be revealed.*"

8. *be made to bring forth*] Rather, *be made to* **travail**.—In this parturition of Zion the whole *earth* was concerned. For "the whole creation had groaned and travailed in pain together" in expectation of the Redeemer.

a nation] This may be, as in lxv. 1, the Gentile Church; and yet the prophecy may also look forward to a further fulfilment, when the national conversion of Israel shall be as "life from the dead" to the world.

for as soon as...] Lit. "for Zion hath travailed, yea, hath brought forth...." Cp. xlix. 18—21.

9. *Shall I...*] Almost taking up Hezekiah's words, xxxvii. 3.—Shall that long and painful national history not have for its issue the birth of a true Israel?

10. *be glad with her*] "exult ye in her."
that love her] *s. w. a.* Ps. cxxii. 6; Lam. i. 2.
mourn for her] as for the dead, 2 S. xiv. 2 (cp. Neh. i. 4).

tisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and
‖ Or, *brightness.* be delighted with the ‖ abundance of her glory.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye
[a] chap. 49. 22. & 60. 4. suck, ye shall be [a] borne upon *her* sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 And when ye see *this*, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward his enemies.

15 For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

17 They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens ‖ behind one *tree* in the midst, eating ‖ Or, *one after another.* swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.

18 For I *know* their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

19 And I will set a sign among

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11. *of her consolations*] granted to her;—by the Paraclete (cp. *v.* 13).
abundance] So Symm. and Theod. (Del., &c.). Kimchi explains it as the marg.

12. *will extend*] Or, "turn" (*s. vv. a.* Gen. xxxix. 21). Hitherto she herself had hindered the stream of peace from flowing towards her (xlviii. 18).
a flowing stream] Or, **an overflowing** *torrent*. Of old, the might of Assyria had rushed over her like a desolating flood (viii. 8, *s. w.*): now *the glory of the* **nations** (lxi. 6) should overflow in order to enrich her.

13. *As one*] Or, *As* **a man.** "Previously" (says Delitzsch) "the people were thought of as children; now they stand before us as one man. Israel is like a man, who has returned home from exile, full of saddening memories; the last traces of which are made to vanish in the maternal arms of Divine Love yonder in Jerusalem."

14. *your bones*]—dried up and sapless, beneath God's anger (Ps. xxxii. 3, 4).
like an herb] Or, **as the young grass.** (Cp. lviii. 11.) *Shall be known:* or, *shall* **make itself known.** *And* his *indignation:* rather, *and* **He shall have** *indignation.*

15. *with fire*] Or, **in** *fire* (2 Thess. i. 8).
like a whirlwind] *s. w. a.* v. 28. *To render:* *s. w. a.* Deut. xxxii. 41, 43; ch. lix. 18.

16. *his sword*] xxvii. 1, xxxiv. 5, 6 (Rev. xix. 21). *Plead:* or, "enter into judgment;" *s. w. a.* iii. 14.

17. *one tree*] standing "in the midst" of the garden,—like a "Tree of Life" (Gen. ii. 9). This follows the Keri. The Kethiv is simply, *one*;—perhaps a leader in idolatrous ceremonies, like those pourtrayed in Ezek. viii. 10, 11, where the "elders" stood with incense before "every form of *creeping things*" (among which the "mouse" is placed in Lev. xi. 29) "and *abominable* beasts" (*s. w. a.* Lev. xi. 41), with Jaazaniah "*in the midst* of them." — For the rites celebrated in these symbolic paradises they made preparation, it seems, by elaborate modes of "sanctifying" (*s. w. a.* Lev. xi. 44; 2 Chro. xxx. 17) and "purifying" (2 Chro. xxx. 18); so uniting an affectation of superior sanctity (cp. lxv. 3—5) with the most degraded heathenism. Israel could not be simply on the level of the nations around. When they came to say, "The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth" (Ezek. viii. 12), they sank "into wickedness more than the nations" (ib. v. 6); combining fanaticism and infidelity, ceremonialism and moral impurity.

18. *For I* know] The sentence is interrupted; as if it were too great a condescension to *comment* on their folly,—so soon to be made evident by the course of events. *And I*—**as for** *their works and their thoughts*, **the time cometh** (*s. w. a.* Ezek. vii. 5, 6, 10) **for gathering** *all nations.*—This *gathering* would be through a process of judgment (Joel iii. 2), with a view to ultimate unity (Zeph. iii. 7—9). Cp. ch. lx. 4.
and see my glory] xl. 5. Cp. on vi. 3.

19. *set a sign*]—the words used in Exod. x. 2, Ps. lxxviii. 43, cv. 27, of the miracles which accompanied the redemption out of Egypt.
among them] the Jews;—for it is from them that a remnant, *the escaped* (cp. Acts ii. 40), are to be sent forth to the nations.—As

them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to* Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, *to* Tubal, and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren *for* an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in ‖ litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.

‖ Or, coaches.

21 And I will also take of them for [e] priests *and* for Levites, saith the LORD.

[e] Exod. 19. 6. chap. 61. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 1. 6.

22 For as the [f] new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

[f] chap. 65. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1.

23 And it shall come to pass, *that* † from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

† Heb. *from new moon to his new moon, and from sabbath to his sabbath.*

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for [g] their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

[g] Mark 9. 44.

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regards the earlier period of ingathering, the sign would appear to be the resurrection of the Crucified (cp. Matt. xii. 39, 40). It has been held probable by some, that the final ingathering may be preceded by a miraculous manifestation of Christ, which shall be to Israel nationally what the vision near Damascus was to Saul. (See Mede's Works, p. 891).

Pul] Here only. Identified by the LXX. with "Phut," which is joined with "Lud" in Ezek. xxvii. 10, xxx. 5 (cp. Jer. xlvi. 9). Perhaps, therefore, *Libya* (see on Gen. x. 6).

Lud] which was under Egyptian rule, Ezek. xxx. 5.

Tubal, and Javan] See on Gen. x. 2.

my fame] Or, "the report of Me:" 1 K. x. 1 (*s. w.*).

20. The Hebrew order is: *They shall bring all your brethren* **out of all the nations** *for an offering.* By the analogy of the language in Num. xviii. 28, 29, this may mean, "Your brethren *from among* all the nations."—Vitr. compares Acts xv. 23: "The apostles and the elders and the brethren, *to the brethren which are of the Gentiles.*"

for an offering] Cp. lx. 7; Rom. xv. 16.

swift beasts] A. Ezra and most moderns, "dromedaries."

to my holy mountain] So the prophecy returns to its commencement, ii. 2—4. It is evident that this "mountain of the Lord" must be distinct from "the house of the Lord" mentioned in the *comparison* which follows. It can only be the Church catholic.

21. *I will also take*] Rather, **of them also will I** *take* (Num. xviii. 6);—of the Gentiles. (So J. Kimchi, Ges., Ew., Del.)

for priests.. for Levites]—to be the ministers of Him, who has made atonement for sin; under whom they serve, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 12.)

22. *your seed* (lxv. 23), *and your name* (lxv. 15)] From Israel, "as concerning the flesh, Christ came; who is God over all, blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5); whose "Name shall endure for ever" (Ps. lxxii. 17).

23. We have here a contrast to the "new moons and sabbaths," which God hated (i. 13). Now *all flesh shall come* (Ps. lxv. 2) *to worship before* the Lord (Ps. xxii. 27, *s. w.*): for the whole "earth" is His footstool (*v.* 1); —every part of it irradiated by the glory of the throne of grace.

24. *they shall go forth*] outside the limits of the holy mountain,—of the new earth.

the carcases (xxxiv. 3, xxxvii. 36; Lev. xxvi. 30) *of the men that have* **rebelled** *against me* (*s. w. a.* i. 2, 28)]—who have rejected Him that was ready to "make intercession for the transgressors" (liii. 12).

Ordinarily, the "worm" feeds on the disorganized body, and then dies; the "fire" consumes its fuel, and goes out. But here is a strange mystery of suffering—a worm not dying, a fire not becoming extinct;—a remorseful memory of past guilt, an all-penetrating sense of Divine Justice. (Cp. Mark ix. 44.)

an abhorring] Or, "horror." The word occurs elsewhere only in Dan. xii. 2 (A. V. "contempt").

The prophet had spoken in xxxiii. 14, also, of "everlasting burnings." He, whose lips had been touched with the "live coal" from the Heavenly Altar, understood that Holy Love must be to all that is unholy "a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29).

JEREMIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

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Jeremiah's Name.

JEREMIAH, whose name written fully in Hebrew is Yirmyahu (ch. i. 1), often contracted into Yirmyah (ch. xxvii. 1, &c.), was by birth a priest, and dwelt at Anathoth, a village in the tribe of Benjamin, about three miles north of Jerusalem. The meaning of the name is disputed, many commentators following Hengstenberg in supposing that there is an allusion in it to the opening words of the triumphal song of Moses in Exod. xv. 1. We there read, "the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea," and thus giving as the interpretation of the name, *Jehovah shall throw*, they see in it a reminiscence of that great deliverance. But the name is not found till the time of David, when, however, it seems to have become common (see 1 Chro. xii. 4, 10, 13), and more probably it signifies *Jehovah shall exalt*. But the whole subject of Hebrew names requires more careful treatment than it has hitherto met with. It is a canon of grammarians that words in most common use become modified and changed to an indefinite extent for the sake of euphony and ease of pronunciation, and as names are of all words most subject to these changes we need a careful consideration of the laws which have regulated their modification. We should thus have firmer ground for deciding, in cases of contested interpretation, which explanation is the more true.

His Parentage.

It is also a subject of dispute whether or not Hilkiah, the father of Jeremiah, was the high-priest of that name, who found the Book of the Law in the temple (2 K. xxii. 8). Clement of Alexandria ('Strom.' i. 328), Jerome ('Quæst. Hebr. in Paralip.' ad cap. ix. 15), Kimchi and Abravanel affirm his identity: most modern commentators deny it, but for two insufficient reasons. First, it is argued that instead of the simple designation of Jeremiah, as one of the priests who dwelt at Anathoth, some word would have been added to Hilkiah's name to indicate his exalted rank. Most certainly no such word would have been added, and the idea arises from a misunderstanding of the Hebrew language. Jeremiah ben-Hilkiah was the prophet's name, and the parts cannot be separated from one another. So in *v.* 3 Jehoiakim ben-Josiah and Zedekiah ben-Josiah are the full names of those monarchs, and the title "king of Judah" belongs to Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, not to Josiah. So Zephaniah, "gloriosa majorum stirpe generatus," as Jerome says, has his genealogy carried back to his great-grandfather Hezekiah (wrongly written Hizkiah in the A. V.), but the title "king of Judah" is not added to Hezekiah's name, for the simple reason that had it been so added it would have affirmed, not that Hezekiah, but that Zephaniah was king. When Delitzsch

affirmed the contrary (Herzog, 'Real-Enc.' under *Zephaniah*) his Hebrew was in fault. So here. Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah the high-priest, may be very good English. In Hebrew it would mean that Jeremiah ben-Hilkiah was high-priest, a very different thing.

The second objection is one of those wide assumptions which scholars sometimes make upon very narrow grounds. Anathoth was a priests' city (1 Chro. vi. 60), and to it Abiathar retired "unto his own fields" after the failure of the attempt to place Adonijah upon the throne (1 K. ii. 26). As Abiathar belonged to the race of Ithamar, it is assumed that Anathoth belonged exclusively to that family, and that Hilkiah, being descended from Phinehas, could have had no residence there. But, as Eichhorn asks, "Must all the priestly families at Anathoth belong to the house of Ithamar, and could none belong to that of Phinehas?" Nothing is more probable than that the dominant house would secure for the high-priest country quarters at a place so very conveniently situated for the performance of his duties at Jerusalem. But whether Abiathar had obtained an estate at a place chiefly belonging to the race of Phinehas, or whether Hilkiah's family were the intruders, or whether Anathoth was attached to the temple service, and both races dwelt there in common; all this is entirely unknown to us, and no argument can be founded upon such uncertain data.

Upon the whole there is so much in the Book of Jeremiah which accords with the assertion of Clement and Jerome, that it is at least possible that it is true. We should thus understand the more than ordinary respect felt for the prophet by Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. While the former put Urijah to death without scruple (Jer. xxvi. 23), he spared Jeremiah, whose fate was a matter of so great importance that the princes of the people and the elders (assembled probably in some solemn law-court) keenly debated it (ib. 10, 16, 17). He seems to have been on terms of personal friendship with Ahikam (ib. 24), and remained with his son Gedaliah on the appointment of the latter as governor over the land (ch. xl. 5, 6). We find again the princes treating Jeremiah with great respect when he wrote the roll in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (ch. xxxvi. 11—19, 25); and when the captains would have slain him towards the end of the siege, doubtless because his words did render the defence of the city difficult, and seemed therefore unpatriotic or even traitorous, Zedekiah was glad by stealth to frustrate their purpose (ch. xxxviii. 8—10). It is noteworthy also that he not only had in his service a scribe, but one who was a high noble. For Baruch was the grandson of Maaseiah the governor of the city (2 Chro. xxxiv. 8), and brother of Seraiah the king's chamberlain (Jer. li. 59). Even the Chaldees held him in great respect (ch. xl. 1—4), and throughout the book everything agrees with the supposition that he was a man of high birth.

Political state of affairs.

His call to the prophetic office came in the thirteenth year of Josiah. It was a time when danger was once again gathering round the little kingdom of Judah, and to Jeremiah was assigned a more directly political position than to any other of "the goodly fellowship of the prophets," as both the symbols shewn to him and the very words of his institution prove. If we glance back at the previous history, we find that the destruction of Sennacherib's army in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, though it had not freed the land from predatory incursions, had nevertheless put an end to all serious designs on the part of the Assyrians to reduce it to the same condition as that to which Shalmaneser had reduced Samaria. It has already been shewn in the note upon 2 K. xviii. 13 that the usual chronology printed in the margin of our Bibles is hopelessly at variance with the dates given to us in the cuneiform inscriptions, which are now throwing so great a flood of light upon the Assyrian period of Jewish history. As Sennacherib did not come to the throne till B.C. 703, according to the testimony of perfectly trustworthy records, it is plain that the defeat of his army could not have taken place seven years previously, in B.C. 710. But I venture with reference to that note to say that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah is

by all means to be retained as the safe connecting link between the chronology of the Bible and that of the cuneiform inscriptions, and that what needs reconstruction is the current chronology, which is based upon calculations which fuller knowledge has proved to be erroneous. Mr Bosanquet in his Appendix to Mr George Smith's valuable history of Assurbanipal (Williams and Norgate, 1871) puts the fourteenth year of Hezekiah as late as B.C. 689. A more elaborate work is that of Schrader, 'Die Keilinschriften u. das Alte Testament,' Giessen, 1872. But as Neteler, 'Theol. Quartalschr.,' Tübingen, 1874, has carefully examined his statements, I shall as a rule quote the latter work. He calculates that the fourteenth year of Hezekiah was B.C. 693. Let me add that Ptolemy's canon, on which the usual chronology depends, is based on Babylonian data, but that Schrader's work is founded on no second-hand digest like that of Ptolemy, but on the original and contemporary authorities.

From these inscriptions we learn that Esar-haddon, who ascended the throne according to the Assyrian chronology in B.C. 679, one year after Sennacherib's murder in B.C. 680, and fourteen years after his defeat, was not merely one of the most powerful kings of Nineveh, but that he also claimed Egypt and Palestine as vassal states. Upon the latter he quickly avenged his father's disgrace, capturing as it seems the city of Jerusalem, and carrying the king Manasseh captive to Babylon. But in spite of his great power he had so much cause of anxiety close at home that he did not care to push his conquests in Syria, and after a short detention Manasseh was allowed to return to Jerusalem, nor did the Assyrians ever seriously interfere with him again during the rest of his long reign. The growing power of the Median empire on the one hand, and the insubordination of Babylon on the other, sufficiently occupied the mind of one, who was not merely a warrior, but also a famous builder, as the remains of his palace at Babylon still attest. The inscriptions found there nevertheless record that he carried the terror of his arms from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the mountains of Armenia and the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. See Schrader, 207—212.

At Babylon Esar-haddon fixed his abode, the struggle for independence being however maintained by the sons of Merodach-baladan, who had found in the king of Elam an ally. And it is interesting to notice that the Bible represents Manasseh as carried to Babylon by an Assyrian army during the only reign in which a Ninevite king dwelt there (see note on 2 Chro. xxxiii. 11). As proved by cylinders brought from his own palace, Esar-haddon for eleven years made Babylon his home, and, as Assurbanipal his son and successor came to the throne in B.C. 666, it is plain that he also died there. In one of the inscriptions of Esar-haddon we find the name of Minasi sar Yahudi, *Manasseh king of Judah*, as one of twenty-two kings of Syria and Phœnicia who had to appear before him. Schrader, p. 228.

Of Assurbanipal we have now an interesting history, and so far from his reign having been inglorious, we find the record of expeditions into Egypt, whence he expelled Tirhakah, and subsequently his son Rudammon. He further, to establish his authority, divided Egypt into twelve petty principalities, by which means it was reduced to a state of utter powerlessness, until Psammetichus once again united them under his own vigorous rule. Subsequently he carried on wars with Tyre, with Arvad, with Minni, a region near Armenia, and with Elam, a country which we constantly find in the cylinders in close alliance with Merodach-baladan and his sons. In one of these expeditions he destroyed in Elam the royal city Shushan, beheaded Teumman the king, and filled the river Ulai with the corpses of the slain. It was after these conquests that he transplanted Elamites into the empty cities of Samaria, to which reference is made in Ezra iv. 9, 10, where he is probably the person called "the great and noble Asnapper." But the cylinders contain no record of any interference with Judæa, which, as the Bible also testifies, enjoyed great peace, not merely during the rest of Manasseh's life, but also during the thirty-one years of Josiah's reign. The king of Judah is however mentioned among the tributaries of Assurbanipal. See Schrader, p. 230.

But towards the end of Josiah's reign, danger began to appear from several quarters. I dismiss the Scythian invasion about the sixth year of Josiah; for though they held supremacy over "the whole of Asia" for twenty-eight years (Her. I. 104), yet there are no traces of any attack made by them on Judæa. They certainly marched into Palestine; for Psammetichus met them, and persuaded them to retrace their steps. On their return, Herodotus tells us that they plundered the temple of Aphrodite at Ascalon (ib. 105); and as the town of Beth-shean situated in the Jordan valley, about twelve miles south of the Sea of Galilee, is called Scythopolis in 2 Macc. xii. 29, we may suppose that they took possession of it in their retreat. But their march was evidently down the level plain of the Shephêlah near the sea, and there are no signs of any attempt on their part to penetrate the mountainous region in which Jerusalem lay. Media was the real scene of their operations. With a defeat of the Medes their supremacy began, and it was a Mede, Cyaxares, who finally expelled them from the country. Neteler, p. 429, from the fact that the Scythians did not molest Judæa, draws the inference that it was under the protection of Nineveh as one of its vassal states.

The danger of Judæa really rose from Egypt on the one hand and Babylon on the other, and the presence of the Scythians had been a relief to it. In Egypt, as we have seen above, Psammetichus put an end to the subdivision of the country, and made himself sole master in the seventeenth year of Assurbanipal, being the twenty-fourth of Manasseh. As he reigned for fifty-four years he was during the last eighteen or nineteen years of his life contemporary with Josiah, but it was his successor Necho who slew Josiah at Megiddo. Meanwhile as Egypt grew in strength so Nineveh declined, partly from the effects of the Scythian invasion, but still more from the growing power of the Medes, and from Babylon having achieved its independence. Two years after the battle of Megiddo Nineveh fell before a combined attack of the Medes under Cyaxares and the Babylonians under Nabopalassar. But Nabopalassar does not seem to have otherwise been a warlike king, and Egypt remained the dominant power till the fourth year of Jehoiakim. In that year, B.C. 586 according to the cylinders, Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho at Carchemish, and began a career of conquest, from which however he was for the time recalled by tidings of his father's death. Attended only by his light-armed troops he hurried home across the desert, but as Jews are mentioned among the prisoners brought to Babylon by the bulk of his army, who returned more leisurely by the usual route, it is plain that he had endeavoured to wrest Judæa from the Egyptian empire. Subsequently having peaceably succeeded his father he returned to the attack, and Jehoiakim became his vassal. After three years of servitude he rebelled (2 K. xxiv. 1), and for a time Nebuchadnezzar seems to have been content with sending against him a small army of Chaldees accompanied by contingents from Syria, Moab, and Ammon (ib. 2); but when Phœnicia joined in the revolt, he took the field in person, and having left part of his army to conduct the siege of Tyre, he marched upon Jerusalem, captured it without delay, and as Josephus tells us ('Antiq.' x. 6. 3), put Jehoiakim to death, and three months afterwards carried Jehoiachin, the queen-mother Nehushta, and a large number of nobles and artificers, captive to Babylon.

The events of the reign of Zedekiah are so fully narrated in the pages of Jeremiah that we need not recapitulate them, nor are they of any importance for the understanding of the nature of the prophet's work and ministry. The facts of importance as shewn above are (1) the growth of Egypt into a first-rate power under Psammetichus. This gives us the true explanation of statements such as those made in ch. ii. 18, 36. When critics like Maurer and Knobel attack these passages on the ground that no tendencies to an alliance with Egypt could have existed in Josiah's time, they betray a great want of historical insight. The statesmen of Judah were not so dull as not to see the political importance of the consolidation of Egypt into one empire, and we may well imagine that the question of a close alliance with Psammetichus was often debated in the

councils of Josiah. The youthful Jeremiah gave his voice against it. Josiah recognized that voice as inspired, and obeyed. His obedience cost him his life at Megiddo, and as men would say, was a mistake. But the Bible has here lifted the curtain which usually hangs over the dealings of God's providence. Josiah's death honourably in battle was vouchsafed in mercy that "he might not see the evil" about to befal Jerusalem (2 Chro. xxxiv. 28). That evil had become a necessity because the Jewish nation had rejected the final opportunity of repentance given them by Josiah's earnest efforts to extirpate idolatry. The particular mode of his death may have been the result of his own obstinacy (ib. xxxv. 21, 22): his death itself was inevitable because he had done his work, done it honestly and thoroughly, but without success. He had failed, but as the failure was not his own fault, he was in mercy spared the sight of the sad results of the nation's refusal to repent.

(2) The second great fact is the transference of power from Nineveh to Babylon. We have seen in our days the transference of empire from Paris and Vienna to Berlin, but neither of these states was ever a great crushing military power like Nineveh, and Berlin was never a subject town like Babylon, nor is Paris now destroyed as was Nineveh. The fall of Nineveh was sudden, complete and final. So great, so powerful, so populous just before, she became as in a day "empty and void and waste" (Nahum ii. 10. See Lenormant, 'Prem. Civilisations,' II. 307). Now so sudden a displacement of power must have had a bewildering effect upon the politics of those days: and no doubt Josiah saw in the expedition of Pharaoh-Necho against Carchemish a determination to profit by the decline of Nineveh, and to establish Egyptian in the place of Assyrian supremacy in all the countries west of the Euphrates. And probably he still believed in Assyria, and imagined her to be a first-rate power.

(3) The last great event was the defeat of Necho by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish four years after the battle of Megiddo. On that day the fate of the Jewish nation was decided, and the primary object of Jeremiah's mission then ceased. The ministry of Jeremiah really belonged to the last eighteen years of Josiah's reign. Judah's probation was then going on, her salvation still possible. And each year the scales of justice hung less evenly: each year Judah's guilt became heavier, her condemnation more certain. But to the eye of man her punishment seemed more remote than ever. Her old enemy Nineveh had fallen. The new power Babylon was inactive. Critics do not sufficiently remember that her empire was the work of one man. It began with Nebuchadnezzar, and virtually it ended with him; but till his victory at Carchemish there was nothing to foreshew his coming greatness. Jehoiakim was the willing vassal of Egypt, the supreme power. No wonder that, being an irreligious man, he scorned all Jeremiah's predictions of utter and early ruin: no wonder that he destroyed Jeremiah's roll, as the record of the outpourings of mere fanaticism. It was his last chance, his last offer of mercy: and as he threw the torn fragments of the roll on the fire he threw there in symbol his royal house, his doomed city, the temple, and all the people of the land.

It was in this fourth year of Jehoiakim that Jeremiah boldly foretold the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, and the wide limits over which it would extend. Very possibly it was this prophecy (ch. xxv.) which placed his life in danger, so that he had to use the ministry of Baruch in sending the roll to Jehoiakim (ch. xxxvi. 5). Whither he and Baruch retired after the king had finally sealed the fate of Jerusalem we know not. "The Lord," we read, "hid them" (ch. xxxvi. 26). When Jeremiah appears again Nebuchadnezzar was advancing upon Jerusalem to execute the prophecy contained in ch. xxxvi. 30, 31. And with the death of Jehoiakim the first period of Judah's history was brought to a close. Though Jeremiah remained with Zedekiah, and tried to influence him for good, yet his mission was over. He testifies himself that the Jewish Church had gone with Jehoiachin to Babylon. Zedekiah and those who remained in Jerusalem were but the refuse of a fruit-basket from which everything good had been culled (ch. xxiv.), and their destruction was a matter of course. Jeremiah held no distinctive office towards them. It is much

to be regretted that the Babylonian inscriptions throw so little light upon this period. While the Assyrian cylinders are rich in historical records, those of Babylon are concerned with religion, or with the royal buildings at Babylon and Borsippa (Schrader, p. 235).

Such, then, was the political state of things in the evil days in which Jeremiah was commissioned to make Jehovah's last appeal to His covenant people: but to understand the prophet's position fully we must cast a rapid glance at the moral change which had come over the Jews, and which was the real cause of the nation's ruin.

Moral state of Judæa.

Up to the time of Manasseh, though there had been bad as well as good kings, and though there had probably always been a certain amount of nature-worship and of unauthorized rites upon the hill-tops, yet the service of Jehovah had been the sole established and even dominant religion of the people. But upon his accession a new order of things began, and, in spite of his repentance, it continued throughout his long reign of fifty-five years. Not only was there the open establishment of idolatry, but a reign of terror commenced, during which not only the prophets, but all who were distinguished for religion and virtue, were cruelly murdered. But we must not imagine that this was owing entirely to Manasseh. His personal character aided in the work, just as afterwards that of Josiah aided Ahikam and Hilkiah in reversing Manasseh's acts. But no one can read attentively the prophecies of Isaiah without finding many clear indications that Hezekiah's reforms did not carry with them the hearts of the people. If, as most probably is the case, the first thirty-nine chapters were formed by the prophet himself into one volume, the date of their publication was certainly later than the twenty-second year of Hezekiah, because Isaiah mentions in it the accession of Esar-haddon, which took place six, or at most seven, years before Hezekiah's death. Neteler, p. 442, even gives as its date B.C. 680, and B.C. 678, only two years afterwards, as that of the death of Hezekiah. The last twenty-seven chapters certainly carry Isaiah's testimony down to this later date, and seem to have been written by him in retirement, and with the sad feeling that for the present the struggle with idolatry was in vain, though there was a bright and glorious prospect in the distant future. But omitting their evidence the first chapter of Isaiah, though not written in that utter despondency which characterizes the tearful words of Jeremiah, yet clearly shews that Hezekiah's efforts, like those afterwards of Josiah, had failed. No reformation was going on in the nation: on the contrary "the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint."

Probably then Manasseh's accession was the signal for an outburst of national fanaticism, in which the worship of Baalim became the established cultus of the state, and the adherents of Jehovah were put to death as such. The nation tried to extirpate the worship of Jehovah, and had long been preparing for this overt apostasy. And when Hezekiah died, and the young king was himself so devoted to Molech as to be ready to sacrifice to him his son, the popular frenzy broke out, and the streets of Jerusalem ran with innocent blood. When subsequently punishment for this of the severest kind was threatened against Jerusalem and Judah (2 K. xxi. 12), it was because the sin was truly the nation's own.

Thus too the repentance of Manasseh availed but little to stay the eager rush of the nation into idolatry. Nor does his own devotion to Jehovah seem to have been very deep. At all events his son, born long afterwards (for he was only twenty-two at his father's death), was called Amon, a name which looks very much like an acknowledgment of Egyptian influence, and a compliment to an Egyptian god. The only other place where this name certainly occurs is at Samaria under the government of Ahab (1 K. xxii. 26).

The reign of Manasseh was important in another particular. During it the land was slowly recovering from its utterly exhausted state at the end of the Assyrian wars. In one inscription Sennacherib boasts that he destroyed in a single campaign (his third) forty-six of Hezekiah's strong cities, that he took captive 200,150

people, with a vast spoil of horses, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep. The king, he says, he shut up like a bird in a cage inside Jerusalem: much of his dominions he gave to the kings of the Philistines, laid upon him a heavy tribute, and made him yield to him not merely his royal treasures, but even his daughters, and the best of the male and female slaves from the royal household ('Records of the Past,' I. 38, 39). As no mercy was shewn in ancient warfare, we can well understand how utterly waste and desolate was the whole land at the end of the first half of Hezekiah's reign. But its recovery, which began after Sennacherib's defeat in Hezekiah's fourteenth year, was continued under Manasseh, and when Josiah came to the throne, there was both great prosperity among the people, and also a better state of feeling.

Once again there were great and good men ready to stand forward as leaders in defence of their national religion and covenant God. And the nation itself had gradually swung round, as nations do now, and had become as dissatisfied with Baal and Molech as their forefathers had been with Jehovah. And Ahikam and Hilkiah had the ear not only of the nation, but also of the young king: and as he grew older his personal piety deepened, so that in his eighteenth year Josiah entered with all his heart into the work of restoring the national religion, and laboured with a stern earnestness to remove every vestige of idol-worship from the land.

Jeremiah's Office.

This was half the work: the other half was entrusted to Jeremiah. The king could cleanse the land: the word of God speaking to their consciences could alone cleanse men's hearts. The office then of Jeremiah was to shew that a change of morals must accompany the public reformation effected by Josiah, or it would not be accepted. It was useless to "sow among thorns" (ch. iv. 3), and that was all the king could do, so long as the state of Jerusalem was one of such licentiousness and open lawlessness that you might search in vain there for a man that practised justice (ch. v. 1). Even the worshippers of Jehovah are accused of theft, murder, adultery, false swearing, and secret adoration of Baal (ch. vii. 9, 10, 11); and such was the universal dishonesty that no man trusted another, and society was utterly disorganized by the want of mutual faith (ch. ix. 4, 5). Yet the long-suffering of God made it necessary that His people should have one more call to repentance, and Jeremiah was the person chosen to publish to them the divine message (ch. i. 5).

It was in Josiah's thirteenth year, when entire quiet prevailed in the political world, and Jeremiah was himself little more than twenty years of age, that his appointment took place, and two symbols were shewn him by which he learned the main reasons why the word of Jehovah was entrusted to his charge.

By the first, the branch of an almond-tree, he was taught that judgment was awake in the land. It was no time for indifference or supineness. Judah must decide at once whether she will serve Jehovah or Baalim, and her choice must be real. If she choose Jehovah, she must prove that such is her choice by worshipping Him in purity and holiness.

For secondly by the symbol of the seething caldron he learned that a dreadful calamity was impending over his country. There are in Jewish history two overwhelming catastrophes, the first, the destruction of the holy city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar; the second, the destruction of the holy city and temple by Titus. The preaching of Jeremiah caused the first to be a new birth to the chosen people: the preaching of Christ caused the Christian Church to spring forth from the other. But had their preaching been more generally listened to, Jerusalem might each time have been saved. It was because men passed on without heeding the warning that the nation thus twice fell (Luke xix. 42). And as in each case only a small minority was saved in the general ruin, the office both of Jeremiah and of our Lord is described by the same metaphor. In ch. vi. 27—30 the prophet compares himself to a smelter, who uses all the resources of his art to extract from the ore the precious silver, but in vain. And in similar terms Malachi compares our Lord to a

refiner and purifier of silver. "And who," he asks, "may abide the day of his coming? for that day shall burn as an oven" (Mal. iii. 2, 3, iv. 1). So complete is the parallelism between Jeremiah and our Lord that it would take a volume to work out its details. And the Jews understood that he was a type of the Messiah, and surrounded his remembrance with many mythical legends (2 Macc, ii. 1—8, xv. 13—16); and when they asked John, "Art thou that prophet?" (John i. 21) there can be little doubt that it was Jeremiah whom they were expecting to appear again. It is an exaggeration of this parallelism which has made many Jewish and some Christian expositors see in Jeremiah the "servant of Jehovah," whose sorrows are so graphically set forth in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.

Jeremiah's Character.

But though Jeremiah was as "a tame lamb brought to the slaughter" (ch. xi. 19), he was not one "dumb before the shearers, and that opened not his mouth" (Isai. liii. 7). Of all the prophets there is not one who so frankly lays open to us his brooding melancholy nature. Usually we know little or nothing personally of the prophets, but Jeremiah discloses to us his inmost thoughts. And his character is most interesting. We find him sensitive to a most painful degree, timid, shy, hopeless, desponding, constantly complaining, and dissatisfied with the course of events, with the office which has been thrust upon him, and with the manner of the divine Providence, but never flinching from his duty. He accuses God of injustice because all his efforts seem to be without result. Bad men, who were leading Judah on to ruin, prospered (ch. xii. 1); false prophets resisted those who had the divine commission (ch. xiv. 13), and no special interference of the divine justice was permitted to vindicate the right and the true. No miracle was wrought by him or for him: no prediction was suddenly verified in a startling way: no demonstration of power was granted him, such as had been common with the prophets of old, and therefore "the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto him, and a derision daily" (ch. xx. 7). His one task was to foretell the utter downfall of his country because of its determined persistence in sin: and his reward was to be "a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth: every one," he says, "doth curse me" (ch. xv. 10). And for this apparent failure he was not prepared. The vast powers conferred upon him at his call (ch. i. 10), and the promise given him of indomitable energy (ib. 18), had made him expect large success. He contrasts therefore the joy with which he had entered upon his office with the disappointment of his hopes (ch. xv. 16, 17, xvii. 16); will God, he asks, be altogether to him as a mirage, or as a brook whose waters fail in time of drought (ch. xv. 18)? His complaints at length reach their bitterest degree, when Pashur, the deputy high-priest, scourged him and put him in the stocks (ch. xx. 2). He then even accuses God of deceiving him, and determines to abandon his office, but finds the prophetic word like a burning fire in his bones, which he cannot stay, and finally loads with terrible curses the day of his birth (ib. 7—18).

In all this we see how violent and prolonged a struggle Jeremiah had with his own nature. He was not one whose sanguine temperament made him see the bright side of things, nor did he quickly find peace and happiness in doing his Master's will. And yet we find no word of rebuke. He is never blamed for his expostulations, but is comforted with the promise that he shall be strong as a "fenced brasen wall" (ch. xv. 20).

The reason of this is that Jeremiah was doing his duty to the utmost extent of his powers. Timid in resolve he was unflinching in execution: as fearless when he had to face the whole world as he was dispirited and prone to murmuring when alone with God. Judged by his own estimate of himself he was feeble and his mission a failure: really, in the hour of action and when duty called him, he was in very truth "a defenced city and an iron pillar and brasen walls against the whole land" (ch. i. 18). We have in Jeremiah a noble example of the triumph of the moral over the physical nature. His whole strength lay in his determination to do what was right at whatever cost. He made everything yield to that which his conscience told him he ought

to do. Danger, opposition, mockery without; fear, despondency, disappointment within, availed nothing to shake his constant mind. The sense of duty prevailed over every other consideration; and in no saint were the words of St Paul better exemplified, that "God's grace is sufficient for a man; because His strength is made perfect in human weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9).

Jeremiah's Style.

Much the same characteristics may be seen in Jeremiah's style of writing. He did not possess those gifts which make the orator. He has none of that strength and vigour, nor of that warmth of imagination, which characterize Isaiah and Micah. He seldom rises to sublimity, and Jerome even describes his manner as somewhat rustic (rusticior). But it has its own beauty, and is in admirable keeping both with the sweetness and constancy of the prophet's character. His usual method is to set his main thought before the mind in a succession of images. They seldom grow out of one another, but simply form a succession of illustrations, each of which is full of poetry, but with this remarkable peculiarity, that Jeremiah never uses his picture as such, but mixes up with it words which are appropriate, not to the metaphor, but to the idea which he is illustrating. He is too earnest, too serious to write as an artist, and so his simile is constantly dismissed almost before it has been fully presented to the mind in order that he may declare his meaning in plain and unvarnished prose. So in ch. i. 15 scarcely has he described the heathen kings as holding a solemn assize over Jerusalem at the usual place of judgment, the vacant space at the entering in of the gate, than he leaves his metaphor undeveloped, and proceeds to speak of the ordinary operations of war. So in ch. vi. 3—5 he compares Jerusalem to a fair pasture-land whither the shepherds drive their flocks to graze upon its luxuriant herbage: but instead of continuing his simile, his next word is the proper military term for an army striking its tents before the march, and the flocks are described as clamouring for the assault, eager to make it during even the mid-day heats, or to risk the confusion of a night-attack. Two verses afterwards, Jerusalem is compared to a cistern storing up wickedness like cool waters: and this metaphor also is abandoned with equal abruptness, and the city becomes a vine, while those who just before were shepherds are now described as gleaners carefully searching among its foliage that no grape may be left.

But this fulness of illustration, so diffuse often and inconsecutive, is exactly in harmony with Jeremiah's subject. It was his hard lot to proclaim the certainty of national disgrace and ruin to a people so hardened in sin that mercy itself called for their chastisement. When a nation is corrupt to the core, and is daily sinking lower in the lees of a sensuous immorality, nothing can save it but the sharpest remedies: sometimes even no remedy can save it, and then it must cease to exist. So even Christianity could not save the Roman empire. It had to be crushed, that out of it might spring a new order of things. Christianity did its work in winning to it those Teutonic conquerors, but how vast was the loss to the whole world occasioned by the necessity of casting into the boiling caldron of barbarian warfare that noble civilization and the treasures which Rome had gathered as the spoils of a conquered universe. Had any old Roman or Christian father been gifted with Jeremiah's prescience, he would have seen the fire blazing amid the forests of Germany, and the caldron settling down unevenly with its face ominously turned toward the south, and would have uttered his lamentation in plaintive notes, such as Jeremiah uses, and in the same melancholy key. If Jerusalem had been capable of a reformation without so severe a punishment as the upsetting upon her of the Chaldæan caldron, Jeremiah's intercession (ch. xiv. 7—9, &c.) would have availed. It was not possible, and therefore the city was destroyed, the temple burnt, the people led into captivity. In the Chaldæan war the mass of the people was destroyed: at Babylon the rest were either made Jews spiritually as well as carnally, or were denationalized. Only forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty men returned with Ezra (Ezra ii. 64), but in them the nation revived.

We can imagine no lot more dreary to a man of intense patriotism like Jeremiah than to see the ruin of his country steadily approaching, to mark each step of its advance, to have to point out its causes, and to know the sole remedy, but also to know that none would heed his words. The prophet was not to "see of the travail of his soul" (Isai. liii. 11). Could he but have witnessed the return of the exiles singing as their pilgrim-songs those beautiful "Psalms of Degrees," and have known that the restoration of the Jewish Church was, humanly speaking, his work, his despondency would have given way to joy. But no such comfort was vouchsafed him. He was required to give up all the innocent joys of life (ch. xv. 17); to abandon the most cherished privilege of a Jew, and live unmarried (ch. xvi. 2); and to abstain even from the civilities and sympathies of society (ib. 5); only to be an object of universal abhorrence, and with none of that success, nor of that special interference of Providence in his behalf, which had so strengthened his predecessors in their labours. Such a lot was beyond the power of any ordinary man. A great poet or a great orator would have failed under such a trial. When we think of Elijah's distress in Horeb (1 K. xix. 10), we see that even that mighty prophet was more fit to confront Ahab in his royal strength at Carmel than to lead a life of daily endurance. This was Jeremiah's calling; not to be a poet or orator, but to persuade men by the force of his moral character, and conquer by suffering. And his style is in keeping with the man.

He spake as he thought. Ever brooding over his message to his people it presented itself to his mind in many aspects, but was in substance ever the same. We have no change of subjects in his prophecy. Whatever there is of novelty arises simply from the altered state of external circumstances. Slowly the sad drama advances towards the sole possible conclusion. Year after year the prophet saw Judah sliding lower and lower down to the very edge of the fearful precipice of national ruin: and at each stage of its downward progress he could but repeat the old warning. Like the zealots who ran about the streets of Jerusalem before its second destruction, he has but the one cry of Woe! All he can do is to adapt his unvarying tale to the present state of things, and present it under new images.

Yet plaintive as he is, and deficient in vigour and incisiveness, prone to lean upon others, and even to repeat himself, yet he is a true poet, but the poet of sorrow. "If," says Umbreit, "we compare Jeremiah's land with the fruitful Carmel and cedar-forest of Isaiah, it is a waste, but a poetic waste, and a true image of the melancholy state of things which lay before his eyes." He even says, "He is certainly the greatest poet of desolation and sorrow, because he most deeply feels them" ('Einl.' p. xv.). But sorrow is distasteful to those who are not suffering it. By God's mercy there are only special times when deep emotion, such as was Jeremiah's, falls in with our own moods. But though it comes but occasionally, yet sorrow comes to all, and then Jeremiah, the prophet of suffering, is full of instruction for us. And perhaps no book of Holy Scripture sets so plainly before men the great issues which depend upon right and wrong.

The foregoing remarks will, it is hoped, serve to make the reader understand the nature of Jeremiah's mission, the peculiarities of his position, and of the work he had to do, and also the characteristics of his style, and the entire inner agreement between it and the prophet's own temperament and the duties he had to perform. It will in the next place be our duty to consider some minor particulars respecting his prophecies: and first of all their arrangement.

Arrangement of Book.

There can be little doubt that the Book of Jeremiah grew out of the roll which Baruch wrote down at the prophet's mouth in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (ch. xxxvi. 2), and which was completed and read before the king in his fifth year, in the ninth month (ib. 9, 21, &c.). Apparently the prophets kept written records of their predictions, and collected into larger volumes such of them as were intended for permanent use. Thus the Book of Ezekiel, the most regularly arranged of all the prophetic writings, consists of two collec-

tions, the first containing those predictions which were prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, the second those subsequent to it. Similarly Isaiah falls into two divisions, the one consisting mainly of predictions prior to Sennacherib's defeat, the second of his great outlook into the future state of Christ's Church. In Jeremiah's case we know the circumstances under which he first collected his prophecies, and are told that Jehoiakim's roll contained a record of "all that God had spoken unto Jeremiah against Israel and against Judah and against all the nations" during the twenty-three years which had elapsed since the prophet's call (ch. xxxvi. 2). But as the twenty-first chapter was written in the reign of Zedekiah, the nineteenth, with the twentieth perhaps as a sort of appendix, is the last which can have formed part of that collection. And most appropriate would it have been for the closing prophecy of the woeful scroll: for under the type of a potter's vessel crushed into worthless fragments the prophet proclaimed before "the ancients of the people and the ancients of the priests" in terms of unflinching severity the final doom of the kingdom of Judah. But an attentive perusal of ch. xiii. makes it more than probable that the prophecy of the linen girdle belongs to the very close of Jehoiakim's reign, containing as it does a message to Jehoiachin, his successor, and to the queen-mother, together with allusions to the march of the Chaldæan army, which brought that monarch's short period of power to so disastrous a conclusion. Apparently therefore we have at most only fragments of Jehoiakim's roll, the largest of which consist of chs. ii.—x. Probably also the prophecies against the Gentiles in chs. xlvi.—xlix. were contained in the roll, but were placed in their present position in order to connect them with the prophecies against Babylon, chs. l., li., written in Zedekiah's fourth year. So also excepting ch. xiii. we must include in the roll the short prophecies which precede that of the potter's vessel.

But from the twentieth chapter all signs of any general arrangement vanish. Attempts indeed have been made to shew that these later chapters are grouped together upon some sort of system, but they are farfetched and unsatisfactory. The conclusion forced upon the mind is that Jeremiah had proposed to himself to gather into one volume all his prophecies, and that this is the reason why Jehoiakim's roll has not come down to us as a whole: but that he died in Egypt before he had been able to accomplish his design; and that at his death whoever had charge of his writings did not feel himself at liberty to attempt any arrangement of them. It is exceedingly probable that this person was Baruch, the prophet's faithful friend and minister. Now placed immediately before the predictions relating to the Gentiles, we find one spoken to comfort Baruch for not receiving the gift of prophecy (ch. xlv.). And nothing is more likely than that, feeling the difference between himself and Jeremiah to be so vast (ch. xlv. 5), he would regard himself as destitute of the necessary authority for arranging his master's memorials, and would leave them as they were.

Finally, the fifty-second chapter was added to complete the history, but as it contains a notice of Evil-Merodach taking Jehoiachin out of prison twenty-six years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and apparently more than twenty years after Jeremiah's death, it is probable that long before this time his prophecies had become current in their present disorder, and that any interference with them would have seemed to violate the reverence felt for one whom the exiles at Babylon early invested with a halo of glory.

The title of the Book of Jeremiah.

If we turn to the superscription of the Book of Jeremiah, we shall find that it confirms in a remarkable manner the foregoing arguments: for it bears upon its surface plain marks of repeated alterations. Originally it seems to have been of the same form as those of Hosea and Micah, "The word of Jehovah which was to Jeremiah in the thirteenth year of Josiah, saying." In this state it would have been the appropriate heading of the two prophecies contained in chaps. i. 5—iii. 5, which apparently formed the first public teaching of Jeremiah. And this title is retained almost verbatim in the Septuagint Version, of which the opening words are τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ὃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ

Ἱερεμίαν. But when Baruch wrote in Jehoiakim's roll a larger collection of his master's prophecies, the title would naturally be so far altered as to include that king's name. The present form is of even a still later date, including everything up to the capture of Jerusalem, and giving therefore the name of king Zedekiah. Even now the title does not include chaps. xl.—xlv., and suggests to us the probability that Jeremiah had intended to arrange and publish all his prophecies up to that fatal event, but was unable to carry out his design, owing it may be to the murder of Gedaliah (ch. xli. 2), and the troubles which followed immediately upon it.

It needs only a comparison of this title with those of Isaiah and Hosea to see that it has been altered again and again as occasion required. And the insertions are even more plainly marked in the Hebrew, where, instead of the varied phrases in the third and fourth verses, "It came also," "Then the word of the Lord came," there is the repetition of the same formula, "And it was." The fourth verse is in fact a return to the second, the intermediate words having been added to bring the date down, first to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and finally to the eleventh year of Zedekiah. It is also worth noticing that no change has been made in the phrase, "in the thirteenth year" of Josiah, which is appropriate solely to chaps. i. 5—iii. 5. If the title had been written at one time, it would certainly have run, "from the thirteenth year of Josiah unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah." Finally the first verse was probably added, and the second made conformable to it, when chaps. xl.—xlv. were included in the collection.

If then the attempt was so often made to edit (as we should say) Jeremiah's writings, whence comes their present want of order? The answer is to be found in the circumstances of Jeremiah's life. In the fifth year of Jehoiakim a large collection of his predictions was made (ch. xxxvi. 32), but the king attempted to seize the prophet and Baruch (ib. 26), doubtless with the intent of treating them as he had treated Urijah (ch. xxvi. 23). They made their escape, but we find no record of any further prophecy of Jeremiah till the Chaldæans were marching upon Jerusalem at the close of Jehoiakim's reign. If the prophet went into exile for safety he would probably leave the roll behind him to deliver his message in his absence, and it might get separated into parts, and much even be lost, as it would be necessary to keep it in secret; for the king would certainly have destroyed it, could he have got it into his possession, and would have punished all in whose possession he had found a document, which he would have deemed treasonable.

And when the catastrophe had come, and city and temple lay in ruins, Jeremiah for the last time essayed to arrange and publish his prophecies. All was over, the prophet's work done, and he probably looked forward to a tranquil but sad old age in the house of Gedaliah, his friend and protector. His first business was to rescue his writings from destruction, no easy matter, for he himself, contrary to Nebuchadnezzar's orders, had been loaded with chains, and dragged, with other captives, to Ramah (ch. xl. 1—4), so that when Nebuzar-adan set him free, he had been spoiled of everything but the few clothes wherewith he was clad. Whether any portion of his writings perished in the ruin of Jerusalem we know not: he rescued, however, those we now possess from destruction, but could do no more. Shortly afterwards Gedaliah was foully slain (ch. xli. 2); the prophet was then forced to go into Egypt against his will (ch. xliii. 6), became there the object of the popular ill-will (ch. xliv. 15), and soon afterwards died, being, as St Jerome asserts, stoned by the Jews at Tahpanhes (Hieron. 'adv. Jovin.' II. 19, &c.).

The want then of arrangement and the patched title are the pledge to us that we possess Jeremiah's prophecies as they were hastily gathered together after the fall of Jerusalem; not remodelled, nor improved by after-thoughts, nor readjusted to make the prediction suit the event, but just as they were recovered from the ruins of the city. At the beginning there is a certain degree of arrangement, but after the first twenty chapters no settled plan is discoverable, and the narrative of so crucial an event as the rejection of the prophet's message by

Jehoiakim is not given till towards the close of the book.

Prophecies against the Gentiles.

The prophecies "against the Gentiles" (chaps. xlvi.—xlix.) are probably those recorded by Baruch upon the roll (ch. xxxvi. 2), but we find them entirely dislocated from the rest, and moreover holding in the Septuagint a different position from that given them in the Hebrew. Whether ch. l. was also part of the roll may be doubtful; certainly ch. li. was not, as it was a message sent privately to the exiles at Babylon in the fourth year of Zedekiah, by the hand of Seraiah, Baruch's brother. Referring as it does to the retribution that was to fall upon Babylon, it naturally holds the last place.

The events after the fall of Jerusalem.

Finally the history of the events which followed upon the destruction of Jerusalem (chaps. xl.—xliv.) was inserted in its proper chronological place, most probably by Baruch, after the prophet's death. This would account for the extraordinary position of ch. xlv., which contains a prophecy addressed to Baruch, but spoken as early as the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign. Possibly, as it related to himself personally, Baruch may have retained in his own possession the record of this prophecy, and attached it to the memorials which, as Jeremiah's scribe, he had kept of the last events of his master's life. But evidently he added nothing which had not the prophet's authority; for had he considered himself at liberty to give a narrative of what occurred in his own words, we cannot understand why he should have withheld from us a thing so deeply interesting as the account of Jeremiah's death. Plainly there was a clearly defined distinction between the words of a prophet and those of an uninspired man. So careful even was the person who added ch. lii., that he notes that Jeremiah was not the writer of it. And so too the title must not be tampered with, but must be left as it stood when the prophet hastily gathered together the prophecies which form the first thirty-nine chapters. Baruch probably altered it during the time when he and Jeremiah were with Gedaliah, but only at the prophet's bidding, and no change might be made after his death. The inspired writings were not things that men dared lightly to alter and interpolate, but were plainly regarded with a deep and earnest reverence.

The LXX. recension.

The last subject that requires discussion is the fact that the text of the Septuagint offers very considerable differences from that of the Masorites, contained in our Hebrew Bibles. From first to last there are "innumerable variations, which sometimes affect only single letters, syllables or words, but sometimes whole verses" (Nägelsbach in Lange's 'Bibelwerk,' Einl. xviii.). On the other hand the omissions are unimportant, and we nowhere find in either text anything altogether independent of the other. There is however a remarkable dislocation of the whole series of the prophecies against the nations: and not only do they hold a different place generally, but are arranged on a different plan among themselves, as will be seen by the following table:

HEBREW.	SEPTUAGINT.
Chap.	Chap.
xlvi. Egypt	= xxvi.
xlvii. Philistines	= xxix. 1—7.
xlviii. Moab	= xxxi.
xlix. 1—6 Ammon	= xxx. 1—5.
„ 7—22 Edom	= xxix. 7—22.
„ 23—27 Damascus	= xxx. 12—16.
„ 28—33 Kedar & Hazor	= xxx. 6—11.
„ 34—39 Elam	= xxv. 15—20.
l., li. Babylon	= xxvii., xxviii.

As the dislocation thus begins at ch. xxv. 15, it follows that chaps. xxv. 15—xlv. become in the LXX. chaps. xxxii. —li., while the appendix, ch. lii., holds the last place in both texts. The order of the nations in the LXX. is Elam, Egypt, Babylon, the Philistines, Edom, Ammon, Kedar, Damascus, and Moab.

Now it will strike everyone that this earlier position of the Gentile prophecies in the LXX. was probably more nearly that which they held in Jehoiakim's roll: and when we turn to ch. xxv. 13 we find them not merely expressly referred to but called "this book which Jeremiah hath

prophesied against all the nations." But in the Hebrew text they are separated from the pronoun "this" which indicated their immediate presence by more than twenty-one chapters, whereas in the LXX. they follow as soon as the sentence is complete. Even the order of the LXX. seems the more ancient: for it inserts the name of Elam at the end of *v.* 13, in a most unintelligible way, reading ἃ ἐπροφήτευσε Ἱερεμίας ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη τὰ Αἰλάμ. It is an enigma of which the only explanation seems to be that Elam really came first in the original roll. In the Hebrew it is put at the end of all the Gentile prophecies, but with a title which, if genuine, would prove that it formed no part of the roll at all. For the consideration of this we must refer our readers to the introductory note on ch. xlix. 34.

Now it was in Egypt that Jeremiah died; for we may dismiss as unworthy of credit the Jewish tradition that he and Baruch were delivered from the hand of their countrymen by Nebuchadnezzar when he conquered that country, and escaped to Babylon ('Seder Olam Rabba,' c. 26); as also the idea of Rashi that he died in Judæa (Com. on Jer. xliv. 14). The whole narrative in the Bible agrees only with the supposition of a hasty death, even if we dismiss as uncertain the Christian tradition of his martyrdom. But the preservation of his writings at all in a time of so great confusion and danger, when Judæa had just been utterly ravaged, and the shelter given to the exiles in Egypt was likely to bring such heavy reprisals upon that country, of itself proves the high value attached to them, and it is not probable but that among the Jews in Egypt there would be true believers who would not allow such precious documents to be taken away without a copy being left behind.

The substantial agreement between the Masoretic text and that represented by the Septuagint Version proves moreover that we have not to do with two independent collections of Jeremiah's writings; on the other hand, the constant differences in detail and the dislocation of the parts shew that the Alexandrian translators had before them a text not altogether identical with our own. Bleek ('Einl.' p. 492) even considers that there is much that makes it probable that the Septuagint represents the original text of Jeremiah, while that of the Masorites has been corrupted and interpolated. Graf, however, has very carefully examined the most important variations in the Septuagint Version, and comes to a very different conclusion, which he expresses in the following severe terms: "After the innumerable instances given above of the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the Alexandrian translator it is altogether impossible to give his new edition (Bearbeitung)—for one can scarcely call it a translation—any critical authority, or to draw from it any conclusion as to the Hebrew text having ever existed in a different form from that in which we have it at present" ('Einl.' lvi.).

With the latter part of this I entirely agree, but I am not prepared to attribute either caprice or arbitrariness to the author of the Septuagint Version. Graf says rightly that it omits about 2700 words of the Masoretic text, while the additions are most trifling. Certain phrases and expressions of constant recurrence in the Hebrew are dropped, names of fathers are seldom given, Jeremiah is scarcely ever called "the prophet," the Deity is styled Jehovah simply, and not "Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel," and the words, "saith Jehovah," are omitted sixty-four times. Now to call this caprice is absurd, and especially where the reason for it is so obvious. When Jeremiah died, the captains who had dragged him down to Egypt, and Baruch with him, would not care to detain Baruch, and he would be anxious to leave, both because his master had disapproved of the descent into Egypt, and also because he would be indignant at the treatment which one he so loved had met with (ch. xliii. 2, xliv. 16). There seems, moreover, to have been an old grudge between the captains and Baruch (ch. xliii. 3), which would make him glad to quit their company. Now what more probable than that before Baruch departed, carrying with him his master's writings, some one in Egypt would make a copy of such treasures? It would be a hurried copy, for Baruch would wish to leave at the first opportunity, and no one could tell how soon this might be. Several persons, perhaps, took part in it, and transcribed on separate rolls of papyrus what already

was written on different skins of parchment. Intended only for private and devotional use, words not absolutely necessary (in all 2700) were omitted, and here and there verses were left out simply through the transcribers' haste. Some commentators have attached great importance to these omissions, and regard as interpolations the passages in the Hebrew text which are not represented in the Septuagint. To my mind the proofs of haste are so overpowering that my wonder is that the undesigned omissions —those I mean not made for the purpose of lessening the labour of transcription— are so few. The only two omissions of consequence are chs. xxxiii. 14—26, xxxix. 4—13, passages which are too long to have been left out by chance. Now of course they have not the confirmation which the Septuagint gives to the rest, and their authenticity must be proved by other arguments. But it would be unreasonable to say that nothing could be genuine which was not contained in the parchments from which the hurried Egyptian copy was made.

It is then at least probable that this Egyptian copy dates from the time when Baruch was about to depart from the country, and was transcribed (of course in Hebrew) for the private use of such Jews as believed Jeremiah to be a true prophet. But it would gradually obtain currency and be copied again and again, and would in time become the authoritative form of the Book of Jeremiah among the Egyptian exiles. Its critical authority negatively is little, because of the extreme haste with which necessarily the copy was made, and because the exigencies of time required all that was not absolutely indispensable to be omitted: affirmatively its authority is very great, for it assures us that all that is common to the two texts is as old as the time when they first separated from one another.

But it will be objected that the fifty-second chapter is later than the time when Baruch left Egypt. Most certainly: but it is, as we have mentioned above, a historical appendix, taken apparently from the end of the second Book of Kings, but containing more full particulars. Now such an appendix was peculiarly fitting for such a book as that of Jeremiah, so full of historical details, and raising naturally in the mind a keen desire to know more of the fate of the vacillating Zedekiah and the unfortunate child-king Jehoiachin. But very probably it was not attached to the book till after the return from exile, when Ezra, followed by the men of the great synagogue, is said to have edited (if I may use the modern phrase) the books of Holy Scripture, and to have inserted in the text much which would now take the form of footnotes. But whenever added in Palestine it would not long remain unknown in Egypt. As I have shewn in the footnote to ch. vi. 9, the Jews in that country were to a very small extent the descendants of those who fled away from Judæa to escape from Nebuchadnezzar; the large majority being colonists planted there subsequently. These new colonists doubtless took with them copies of the fuller Hebrew text with the added appendix: but the shorter form was looked upon as that which had local authority. Patriotic Egyptian Jews doubtless held that it was the genuine text; and as such the Alexandrian translators gave it the preference, but they could have no objection to adding to their version so useful an annex as the fifty-second chapter.

Even independently of the evidence of this Egyptian text the genuineness of nearly every part of the Book of Jeremiah is so generally acknowledged that an occasional footnote on some impugned passage is all that is necessary. The value of the double text rather lies in its shewing us how quickly the writings of the prophets became generally current, and how impossible it was to interpolate them, and play on a large scale with them those tricks, which many recent critics have supposed. If the writings of the prophets attracted such interest, that copies of them were soon made, and people quickly read and studied them, though interpolations might still be possible, yet any falsification of them on a large scale would become so difficult as to be virtually impossible. The acknowledged genuineness of the Book of Jeremiah is also valuable in another respect, namely, that no prophet so constantly quotes the words of his pre-

decessors. He evidently knew the other Scriptures by heart, and perpetually reproduces them, but in his own way. He never quotes them briefly and succinctly, but developes them, so as to give them something of his own soft luxuriance; but his testimony to the existence of them in the same state as that in which we have them at present, is most clear. Most numerous are his quotations from the Pentateuch, and especially from the Book of Deuteronomy. It had been so lately found that this is just what we should expect. His young mind must have been deeply penetrated by such a scene as that described in 2 K. xxiii. 1—3. But such quotations in a book of which the genuineness is acknowledged, are of the greatest possible value for the criticism of the writings from which they are taken.

As Jeremiah has also the peculiar habit of repeating himself, I have appended a list of the principal places where this occurs:

Chap.		Chap.
ii. 28	repeated in	xi. 13.
v. 9, 29	„	„ ix. 9.
vi. 13—15	„	„ viii. 10—12.
vii. 14	„	„ xxvi. 6.
xi. 20	„	„ xx. 12.
xv. 2	„	„ xliii. 11.
xvi. 14, 15	„	„ xxiii. 7, 8.
xvii. 25	„	„ xxii. 4.
xxiii. 19, 20	„	„ xxx. 23, 24.
xxx. 11	„	„ xlvi. 28.
xxxi. 35, 36	„	„ xxxiii. 25, 26.

List of places in which the same thought or image is repeated.

The brasen wall, ch. i. 18, xv. 20.

The turned back, ch. ii. 27, vii. 24, xxxii. 33.

Fury that burns like fire, ch. iv. 4, xxi. 12.

The travailing woman, ch. iv. 31, vi. 24, xiii. 21, xxii. 23, xxx. 6.

Rising up early, ch. vii. 13, 25, xi. 7, xxv. 3, 4, xxvi. 5, xxix. 19, xxxii. 33, xxxv. 14, 15, xliv. 4.

Water of gall, ch. viii. 14, ix. 15, xxiii. 15.

The incurable wound, ch. xv. 18, xxx. 12.

The figs too bad to be eaten, ch. xxiv. 8, xxix. 17.

Phrases which often recur.

Walking in the stubbornness of the heart, ch. iii. 17, vii. 24, ix. 14, xi. 8, xiii. 10, xvi. 12, xxiii. 17.

The evil of your doings, ch. iv. 4, xxi. 12, xxiii. 2, 22, xxv. 5, xxvi. 3, xliv. 22.

The voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, ch. vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10, xxxiii. 11.

Men dying in the siege by the sword, the pestilence, and by famine, ch. xiv. 12, xv. 2, xviii. 21, xxi. 7, 9, xxiv. 10, xxvii. 13, xxix. 17, xxxii. 24, 36, xxxiv. 17, xxxviii. 2, xlii. 17, 22, xliii. 11, xliv. 13.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The time,* 3 *and the calling of Jeremiah.* 11 *His prophetical visions of an almond rod and a seething pot.* 15 *His heavy message against Judah.* 17 *God encourageth him with his promise of assistance.*

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that *were* in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

2 To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying

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CHAP. I. 1. *The words of Jeremiah*] The usual title of the prophetical books, occurring no less than eight times, is The Word of the Lord: on the contrary the two books of Amos and Jeremiah are called the words of those prophets, probably, as Kimchi, Abravanel, and other Jewish commentators suggest, because they contain not merely prophecies, but also the record of much which belongs to the personal history of the writers. In Hebrew historical works are regularly called *the words*, rendered *acts* in 1 K. xi. 41; 2 Chro. xxxiii. 18; but *book* thrice in 1 Chro. xxix. 29. So also "The Life of Moses," quoted by Bp Pearson on the Creed, is called in the original דברי משה, the words of Moses. More exactly, therefore, this title might be translated the life or acts of Jeremiah. Graf however and others understand by it a collection of the prophecies of Jeremiah, supposing the phrase to be taken from ch. xxxvi. 10, but the other view is more in accordance with Hebrew idiom.

Jeremiah] Most commentators render this name *Jehovah shall throw down*, in proof of which Hengstenberg refers to Exod. xv. 1, where the verb to throw down is *ramah*. A name so ill-omened would scarcely have been in such common use, for seven or eight Jeremiahs are mentioned in the Bible, and a more reasonable derivation is from *ram*, high, giving as the meaning *God exalteth*.

the son of Hilkiah] As the proper names of the Jews were comparatively few, their bearers were further distinguished by the addition of the father's name. Could we keep the Hebrew form ben-Hilkiah, we should escape the danger of applying to the father what belongs to the son, and of inaccuracies such as occur in the translation of the rest of the verse. This Hilkiah may have been the high-priest of that name. See Introduction, p. 311.

of the priests that were] More correctly, **who was**, *i.e.* **dwelt**. The right meaning is that Jeremiah was a priest, who dwelt at Anathoth. The Vulgate makes the same mistake as the A.V., but the LXX. and the Targum render it correctly. The Syriac, like the Hebr., is ambiguous, the pronoun being indeclinable, and neither language using a copula. Hitzig supports the rendering of the A.V.

2. *To whom the word of the* LORD *came*] The simple Hebr. phrase is *to whom the word of the Lord* **was**; but as the verb *to be* is seldom in Hebr. a mere copula, but has a strong meaning, signifying *to abide, to exist*, the phrase implies that Jeremiah possessed God's word from that time onward, not fitfully as coming and going, but constantly.

the thirteenth year of his reign] According to the ordinary reckoning this would be B.C. 629, but if the Ptolemaic canon is right in putting the capture of Jerusalem in B.C. 586, it would be two years later, namely B.C. 627. According however to the Assyrian chronology it would be B.C. 608. It was the year after that in which Josiah began his reforms.

3. *It came also*] Literally, **And it was.** In the subsequent enumeration of the kings in whose time Jeremiah prophesied, two are omitted, Jehoahaz and Jeconiah, probably on account of the shortness of their reigns. The whole period contained in the verse is no less than forty years and six months, namely, eighteen years under Josiah, two

away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

4 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

[a] Isai. 49. 1, 5. 5 Before I [a] formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I [b] sanctified thee, *and* I [†] ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. [b] Gal. 1. 15, 16. [†] Heb. *gave.*

6 Then said I, Ah, [c] Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. [c] Exod. 4. 10.

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periods of eleven years each under Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and three months under each of the omitted kings Jehoahaz and Jeconiah. Few prophets were God's witnesses for so long a period, and under such trying circumstances, as Jeremiah.

in the fifth month] The capture of Jerusalem took place in the fourth month, but its destruction in the fifth, called Ab (2 K. xxv. 3, 8), the ninth day of which was subsequently kept as a fast-day in remembrance of this sad event (Zech. vii. 3).

INTRODUCTORY PROPHECY. THE CALL OF JEREMIAH.

4. *the word of the* LORD *came unto me*] Or, **was.** The form of the title, as we have shewn in the Introduction, p. 321, proves that this history of Jeremiah's call to his office formed a part of his first address to the people. It was no afterthought, but a public proclamation, by which from the first he stood forth, claiming to act by an external authority, and to speak not his own words, but those of Jehovah. It is plain too from what we read afterwards that he considered that the prophetic office was forced upon him from without: for we find him resisting the divine call. See ch. xv. 18, xx. 7, 14—18.

The narrative divides itself into four parts, the call, *vv.* 5—8; the inauguration, *v.* 9; the objects of his ministry, *vv.* 10—16; the promise of divine assistance, *vv.* 17—19.

5. *I knew thee*] The Hebr. verb *to know* is not merely fore-knowledge, the προγινώσκειν of the New Test. (Rom. viii. 29; 1 Pet. i. 20), but something more. In Amos iii. 2, it is equivalent to *choosing, selecting:* and constantly it means a thorough approval consequent upon experience. So Œcolampadius, Verbum cognitionis verbum favoris est. Among many instances see Gen. xviii. 19; Isai. li. 7, lviii. 3; Nahum i. 7; and so in the New Test. Matt. vii. 23, xxv. 12.

I sanctified thee] The Hebr. verb (הקדישׁ) *to sanctify*, has usually been explained as signifying *to separate*, ἀφορίζειν, but this view is untenable. The original meaning of the root is to be *pure, clean* (see note on Exod. xix. 6), thence, from the ancient connection of the ideas of cleanliness and holiness, to be *holy*. This connection is seen in the designation of animals as clean that were fit for sacrifice (Gen. vii. 2), in the washings of the priests and of consecrated vessels, and finally in baptism. The causal conjugation therefore means *to make holy*, and so to dedicate to holy purposes (see 2 S. viii. 11). God therefore, having first *selected* Jeremiah, now consecrates and devotes him to the prophetical office.

I ordained thee] Rather, *Before I formed thee in the belly* **I approved of thee** [as one fit for the prophetic office], *and before thou camest forth from the womb* **I made thee holy** [dedicated thee to holy uses], **I have appointed thee** [now by this public call to be] *a prophet unto the nations.* The conjunction *and* inserted by the A.V. (following the Vulg.) would make the prophet's appointment as well as his sanctification to have preceded his birth.

unto the nations] It is remarkable how carefully the Targum, which embodies the Jewish interpretation, perverts every indication of God's future purposes of mercy to the heathen. So here it paraphrases the words thus: "I have appointed thee as prophet to make the Gentiles drink the cup of cursing." Equally insufficient, though less false, is the explanation of St Chrysostom, that the words refer to the prophecies against the neighbouring nations. More truly St Ambrose says that the privileges contained in this verse are so great as in their full sense to be true only of Christ Himself, while to Jeremiah they belong as being in so many particulars a type of Christ ('Apol. Davidis,' c. 11. Cp. Lactant. 'Inst.' IV. 8, etc.). Add that prophets unto Israel only there were many: Gad, Nathan, Abijah, Elijah, Elisha, Urijah, &c. They did God's work, and left no further memorial behind them. Other prophets were God's gifts to all mankind, and by their writings "they being dead, yet speak unto us."

6. *Ah, Lord* GOD*!*] More correctly translated **Alas, O Lord God,** in Josh. vii. 7; Judg. vi. 22; or, literally, "Alas, my Lord Jehovah." There is no resistance on Jeremiah's part, but he shrinks back alarmed. So at the vision of the cherubim Isaiah cried "Woe is me!" (Isai. vi. 5), and Ezekiel "sat astonished for seven days" (Ezek. iii. 15). Jeremiah's gentle and tender spirit submits, but with a cry of pain.

I cannot speak] The Targum paraphrases this correctly *I cannot prophesy, i.e.* I have not those powers of oratory necessary for success. The prophets of Israel were the

7 ¶ But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

8 [d] Be not afraid of their faces: for [e] I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and [f] touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have [g] put my words in thy mouth.

10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to [h] root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

11 ¶ Moreover the word of the

[d] Ezek. 3. 9.
[e] Exod. 3. 12. Deut. 31. 6, 8. Josh. 1. 5. Hebr. 13. 6.
[f] Isai. 6. 7.
[g] chap. 5. 14.
[h] chap. 18. 7. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

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national preachers in religious matters, and their orators in political.

I am *a child*] This implies nothing very definite about Jeremiah's age, though subsequently the Rabbins fixed fourteen as the limit up to which a person was still a *lad, nangar*, the word used here. See notes on Gen. xxiv. 16, 1 K. ii. 2. Still the long duration of Jeremiah's prophetic mission makes it probable that he was very young when called to the office, as also were Isaiah, Hosea, Zechariah, and others.

7. *Say not, I* am *a child*] As Jeremiah does not resist God's will, but only mentions real difficulties (so Luke i. 34), there is no word of reproof such as Moses incurred by his repeated refusals to obey God (Exod. iv. 14).

thou shalt go] Many commentators take these words as a promise, thou *wilt* go, *wilt* speak. The A.V. is preferable: for by saying that he was a child Jeremiah suggested two difficulties, the first inexperience, the second timidity. God now removes the first of these. Inexperience is no obstacle where the duty is simple obedience. His timidity is removed by the promise given him in the next verse.

9. *touched my mouth*] **made it touch.** Both here and in Isai. vi. 7, where equally there is the inauguration of a prophet into his office, the Hiphil or causative conjugation is used. In Dan. x. 16, where there is no such inauguration, we have the simple conjugation, *he touched*. This *making to touch* was the symbol of the bestowal of divine grace and help, by which that want of eloquence, which the prophet had pleaded as a disqualification, was removed; and distinctly was an external act, impressing itself objectively upon his consciousness, though in what exact manner it is impossible for us to tell.

10. *I have...set thee over*] Third in order comes the object of Jeremiah's mission, briefly indicated in this verse, and more fully in the two visions which follow. The words *I have set thee over* literally mean *I have made thee Pâkeed, i.e.* deputy. This title is given only to those invested with high authority, as, for instance, to the officers appointed to collect the corn in Egypt during the years of plenty (Gen. xli. 34), to Abimelech's viceroy (Judg. ix. 28), to the high-priest's deputy (2 Chro. xxiv. 11), to the representative of the Levites at Jerusalem (Neh. xi. 22), and to the vicegerent of the high-priest in the temple (Jer. xx. 1, xxix. 26). Here then we see the other aspect of prophecy. God's dealings may be viewed either from above or from below (Phil. ii. 12, 13). Viewed from God's side the prophet is a mere messenger, speaking what he is told, doing what he is bid. From man's side he is God's vicegerent, with power "to root out, and to pull down." Looking at his office in this its human aspect Ezekiel speaks of "the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city" (Ezek. xliii. 3). Our translators were so offended at this that they have tried in the margin to soften it down, and render it "When I came to prophesy that the city should be destroyed." But in their relations to men, it was the prophets who built up and pulled down, and it was this which made their word "a fire to devour, and a hammer to beat down and crush" (ch. xv. 14, xxiii. 29).

to root out, and to pull down] In the Hebr. the verbs are *nethosh* and *nethotz*, an instance of the alliteration so common in the prophets, and agreeable to oriental taste. The former signifies the destruction of anything planted, and is rightly rendered *to root out:* the latter refers to buildings, and as it implies force, *to pull down* is scarcely strong enough. It should be *to break down, throw down*. In the final clause *to build and to plant* are the opposites of these two ideas.

to destroy, and to throw down] The two former words would have confined the prophet's mission to *nature* and to *cities*. Two words therefore of more general meaning follow, of which the second more exactly means **to tear in pieces**. Alting remarks that there are four words of destruction, and but two of restoration, as if the message were chiefly of evil. And such was Jeremiah's message to his contemporaries, but all God's dealings are finally for the good of His people. The Babylonian exile was for the moment a time of chastisement: it became also a time of national repentance (see ch. xxiv. 5—7).

LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

13 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof *is* [†] toward the north.

14 Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the [i] north an evil [†] shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

† Heb. *from the face of the north.*

[i] chap. 4. 6.

† Heb. *shall be opened.*

11. *what seest thou?*] There is no reason for regarding the two visions which follow as mere vehicles chosen by the prophet for conveying to the people the convictions of his own mind. If we admit a supernatural element in prophecy, visions would be the most simple means of communication between God and man.

a rod of an almond tree] *Makkêl shâkêd.* As the former word is often found in the sense of "a staff," such as travellers carry, and even of the staves held in their hands by the Jews when eating the passover (Gen. xxxii. 10; Exod. xii. 11), many translate *a staff of almond wood.* The vision would thus signify that God, as a traveller staff in hand, was just about to set forth upon His journey of vengeance. But the rendering of the A. V. is supported by Gen. xxx. 37, and a branch of an almond tree putting forth its pink flowers in winter, with its light green leaves scarcely venturing as yet to unfold themselves, is an expressive emblem of wakefulness and activity.

The other word, *shâkêd*, is not the ordinary name for an almond tree, but *luz*, whence the early name for Bethel, the almond city (Gen. xxviii. 19). Twice however *shâkêd* is used for almond nuts (Gen. xliii. 11; Num. xvii. 8), and the almond is still called *sheged* in Syriac. There is no reason therefore for throwing doubt upon the translation, but probably *luz* was the ordinary, and *shâkêd* a poetical name given to the tree for the same reason which now made Jeremiah choose it. The verb *shâkad* signifies *to be awake*, and as the almond blossoms in January, and ripens its nuts in March, it seems to be awake while other trees are still sleeping in the torpor of winter. See Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' p. 332, and Pliny, 'Hist. Nat.' lib. XVI. 25.

12. *I will hasten*] Rather, **I watch over** *my word to perform it.* The Hebrew word is the present participle *shokêd*, and implies therefore continuous action.

13. *a seething pot*] The first vision was for the support of the prophet's own faith during his long struggle with his countrymen: the second explains to him the general nature of his mission. He was to be the bearer of tidings of a great national calamity about to break forth from the north. He sees *sîr*, a pot, or rather **caldron**. It was a vessel of metal (Ezek. xxiv. 11), used for the cooking of meat (1 S. ii. 14), large enough to prepare the meal of a numerous community (2 K. iv. 38), and broad at the top, as it was also used for washing purposes (Ps. lx. 8). This caldron moreover was boiling furiously. The verb used here is elsewhere more correctly rendered *to blow*, of a smith's bellows (Isai. liv. 16); and the meaning may be *a pot blown upon, i.e.* a pot made to boil furiously by blowing the fire.

the face thereof is toward the north] More correctly the margin, *the face thereof is from the face of the north, i.e.* **toward the south.** We must suppose this caldron set upon a pile of wood, bones (Ezek. xxiv. 5), and other inflammable materials. As they consume it settles down unevenly, with the highest side toward the north, so that its face is turned the other way and looks southward. Should it still continue so to settle, the time must finally come when it will be overturned, and will pour the whole mass of its boiling contents upon the south.

14. *Out of the north...*] The swelling waters of a flood are the usual type of any overwhelming calamity (Ps. lxix. 1, 2), and especially of a hostile invasion (Isai. viii. 7, 8): but this is a flood of scalding waters, whose very touch is death. The caldron represents the great military empires upon the Euphrates. In Hezekiah's time Nineveh was at their head; but stormed by the armies of Cyaxares and Nabopalassar it is itself now the victim whose limbs are seething in the caldron, and the seat of empire has been transferred to Babylon. But whoever may for the time prevail, the tide of passion and carnage is sure finally to pour itself upon Judæa. For the same reasons which made the Assyrians push their conquests in that direction, namely, the inevitable struggle for supremacy with Egypt, will act with equal force upon the Chaldeans: and this had long before been predicted by the prophets. (See Isai. xxxix. 6, 7.)

an evil] More correctly, **the** *evil.* The definite article of the Hebrew points to its being that special evil, which from the days of Micah (Mic. iii. 12) all the prophets had denounced upon the Jews if they lapsed into idolatry.

shall break forth] Literally, **shall be opened**, shall shew itself, be disclosed from the north. See Note at end of Chapter.

the inhabitants of the land] That is, Judæa.

15 For, lo, I will [k] call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

16 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

17 ¶ Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them

[k] chap. 5. 15. & 6. 22. & 10. 22.

At present the caldron is fiercely boiling upon the Euphrates. As soon as either of the parties struggling there gains the victory it will pour the whole seething mass over other countries in the shape of an invading army (see ch. xxv. 17—26). And the caldron looks ominously towards Judæa, but it has not yet overturned, and if Judah repent, God may make it exhaust its fury upon itself, or a defeat instead of a victory at Carchemish may alter the whole tide of events. But if Judah remain impenitent, it needs only for things to take their natural course, and it must become the prey of whosoever conquers in the plains of Mesopotamia.

15. *I will call*] **I am calling.** The present tense of the Hebrew shews that the judgment has begun. God is summoning His hosts to the war.

the families of the kingdoms] According to the accentuation *families* and *kingdoms* are in apposition to one another; *Lo! I am calling all the families, even the kingdoms of the north:* but the vowel-points favour the rendering of the A. V. Neither accents nor vowel-points form any part of the original text; but if with the A. V. we accept the latter, by *families* will be meant the various races by which the provinces of the Babylonian empire were peopled.

they shall set every one his throne] The chiefs of these various races come as God's ministers to hold solemn court, and give sentence in His Name (see ch. xxv. 9). They therefore set each one his throne in the usual place for administering justice, namely, the entering in of the gates, where a large open space was always left in cities for the purpose. Not regarding it in this light, many commentators find a difficulty in the word *throne*, and St Jerome even substitutes for it *tent*, as more appropriate to a besieging army. But the word properly and constantly is used of the tribunal of justice (Neh. iii. 7; Ps. ix. 4, cxxii. 5; Prov. xx. 8; Isai. xvi. 5), and the setting it up in the customary place of trials brings before us the double aspect of human things referred to above. Viewed in one light war is the boiling caldron of human passion, upset by hazard, and bringing only ruin in its course; in the other it is God sitting in judgment, with the kings of the earth as His assessors, solemnly pronouncing sentence upon the guilty.

against all the walls...against all the cities] Many commentators refer these two clauses back to the previous verb *shall come*, but the explanation is rather to be found in the general sense. The setting of the thrones is a metaphor only, suggesting that Jerusalem is not to fall until sentence has been judicially pronounced. But the nations come to execute judgment by mounting as enemies upon her walls and storming her cities. The difficulty lies in the abruptness with which Jeremiah leaves his metaphor to return to the actual siege and capture of the city.

16. *I will utter my judgments...*] This phrase, which literally signifies *I will speak my judgments with them*, occurs again (ch. xxxix. 5 marg.) of the sentence passed by Nebuchadnezzar upon Zedekiah. By the capture of Jerusalem God as judge pronounces solemn condemnation upon her.

all their wickedness] In accordance with the custom of law courts, the crimes of the guilty city are mentioned in the sentence. The charges brought against her are three: first, the desertion of the true God; next, the offering incense to false gods, which the LXX. probably rightly understand of the whole act of sacrifice; and, lastly, the making obeisance to, or bowing down (2 K. v. 18) before, images of human workmanship. In the N. T. this obeisance is similarly called *worship*. It may be noticed that the ancient versions do not translate the Hebrew phrase *other gods* literally, but rather explain it, rendering it *foreign gods*, or the gods of other nations. Strictly speaking, there are no other gods (1 Cor. viii. 4—6), for the beings so called by Gentile ignorance were the offspring only of superstition or fancy.

17. *gird up thy loins*] The promise of divine assistance forms the fourth and concluding portion of the prophecy. The girding of the loins was a symbol of preparation for earnest exertion, and implied also firm purpose, and some degree of alacrity. Jeremiah was not to despair, but to enter cheerfully upon his office, upheld by the hope that the divine message which he was commissioned to bear would move the people to repentance and avert the threatened danger. Nor were Jeremiah's labours in vain. When we read that those carried into captivity with Jeconiah were the very best of the land, "sent away

all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I ‖ confound thee before them.

‖ Or, *break to pieces.*

18 For, behold, I have made thee this day [l] a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

[l] Isai. 50. 7. chap. 6. 27. & 15. 20.

19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

from Jerusalem for their good" (ch. xxiv. 5); and when too we remember the earnest piety of the returning exiles, we perceive the importance of Jeremiah's ministry.

be not dismayed...] Literally, *be not dismayed at their faces, lest I dismay thee before their faces.* Dathe and others try to soften down the expression, thinking that so gentle a spirit as Jeremiah's needed encouragement rather than threatening. But it is a mistake to suppose that gentle people are the most yielding; on the contrary, few are so tenacious of their purpose. Their hesitation is chiefly felt only upon first undertaking some enterprise which their diffidence makes them imagine to be beyond their powers; and of this Jeremiah is a remarkable example. Naturally despondent and self-distrustful, there was no feebleness in his character; and he possessed a far higher quality than physical courage in his power of patient endurance. There was in him a moral superiority of the will, which made him, at any cost to himself, faithfully discharge whatever his conscience told him was his duty.

18. *a defenced city*] Similarly the promise is made to Ezekiel, that his forehead shall be hard as the diamond against his adversaries (ch. iii. 9).

brasen walls] Metaphorically the walls and fortifications of the city represent the prophet's power of patiently enduring the attacks of his enemies; while the iron pillar, supporting the whole weight of the roof (Judg. xvi. 29; 1 K. vii. 21), signifies that no trials or sufferings would crush his steadfast will.

19. *they shall not prevail*] As in *v.* 17 the prophet was warned that if he made his personal defects an excuse for shrinking from his duty, the result would be his disgrace through those defects; so now he has the assurance that his faithful discharge of the duties of his office shall not be followed by any of those evils, which his natural temperament made him chiefly fear.

NOTE on CHAP. I. 14.

The emendation *shall blow forth*, תפוח for תפתח, see on *v.* 13, suggested by the ἐκκαυθήσεται of the LXX., is not supported by any other version.

CHAPTER II.

1 God, having shewed his former kindness, expostulateth with the Jews their causeless revolt, 9 beyond any example. 14 They are the causes of their own calamities. 20 The sins of Judah. 31 Her confidence is rejected.

JEREMIAH'S SECOND PROPHECY.

Chaps. ii. 1—iii. 5.

An expostulation with Israel because of idolatry.

INTRODUCTION.—To understand the prophecies contained in the next five chapters (chaps. ii.—vi.), it is necessary briefly to consider when they were written. Most probably, then, we have in them the records of Jeremiah's earlier ministrations during the comparatively uneventful years of Josiah's reign. As we have seen (ch. i. 4) the great object of the prophet's mission was to urge upon the people the necessity of making use of that final opportunity of repentance then given them. If personal amendment followed upon the king's reforms Judah might yet be saved. We have then in these chapters such portions of Jeremiah's earlier teaching as were deemed fit also for the Church's use in all time.

Several reasons justify us in this view. For first there is the inherent probability that in the roll written by Baruch at Jeremiah's command (xxxvi. 32), the arrangement would be as far as possible chronological. The very object of the roll was to shew that the prophet consistently throughout the whole period of his mission had foretold the impending doom of Jerusalem; and no better proof of this could be given than that he had predicted it in the palmy days of Josiah. Secondly, the middle portion of the prophecy (iii. 6—iv. 4) is expressly ascribed to "the days of Josiah the king," and its general purpose so exactly coincides with what precedes and follows, that we can read the whole five chapters as one continuous prophecy. Finally, no special event is

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember ‖ thee, the kindness of thy [a] youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown.

‖ Or, *for thy sake.*
[a] Ezek. 16. 8.

3 Israel *was* holiness unto the LORD, *and* the firstfruits of his increase: [b] all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

[b] chap. 12. 14.

4 Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel:

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, What

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referred to in these chapters. Alike the sin of the people and their punishment are spoken of in general terms.

The sole objection to our thus regarding these chapters as the memorials of the prophet's teaching in Josiah's time is found in the mention of Egypt in chap. ii. 16, 18, 36. Because Josiah met his death in battle against Pharaoh-Necho, critics like Maurer and Knobel affirm that no tendencies towards an alliance with Egypt could have existed in any period of his reign. More thoughtfully Ewald sees in this prophecy the reason of Josiah's resistance to that king. Egypt was a country just rising into power under the vigorous rule of Psammetichus, and in Jerusalem both king and people would naturally at first regard its uprise with pleasure, as likely to prove a counterpoise to the lust of dominion of the warlike Assyrians. During the time of Nineveh's approaching downfall Egypt even became the dominant power; and an alliance with it had always seemed to a powerful school of statesmen at Jerusalem their true policy, and had as consistently been opposed by the unanimous voice of the prophets. Whatever may have been Josiah's original feelings, he probably abandoned all idea of alliance with Egypt at the command of the prophet; nor were the two countries brought into connection until Pharaoh-Necho, after the battle of Megiddo, placed one of his own partizans upon the Jewish throne.

We conclude, therefore, that this prophecy belongs to the early years of Jeremiah, and was published during Josiah's reign. It further consists of three parts, of which the first (*vv.* 1—13) contains an appeal from God to all Israel, *i.e.* the whole twelve tribes, proving to them His past love, and that their desertion of Him was without ground or reason. In the second (*vv.* 14—28) he shews that Israel's calamities were entirely the result of her apostasy. In the last (ii. 29—iii. 5) we see Judah imitating Samaria's sin, and hardening itself against correction.

CHAP. II. 1. *Moreover*] Literally, **And.** It is important to notice the close connection between Jeremiah's call and his first prophecy,

2. *Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem*] Up to this time Jeremiah had lived at Anathoth, but he is now required to make Jerusalem the scene of his ministrations.

I remember thee...] More literally, **I have remembered for thee the grace** *of thy youth, the love of thine espousals,* **thy going** *after me in the wilderness* **in an unsown land.** The second and third verses form the text as it were of Jeremiah's sermon, in which he contrasts the present unfriendly relations between Jehovah and His people with their past love. Israel, as often elsewhere, is represented as a young bride (Ezek. xvi. 8; Hos. ii. 20; Joel i. 8); but is it Israel's love to God, or God's love to Israel which is meant? Most commentators understand it of Israel's past affection, which God remembers in order to requite her for it. Others (Venema, Graf, etc.) argue that it is God's past love to Israel which inclines Him still to be merciful. The former interpretation seems the more true. The walking after God in the wilderness was an act of love on Israel's part. Israel did leave Egypt at Moses' bidding, and at Sinai was solemnly espoused to Jehovah. Similarly Hosea (ix. 10) speaks with approval of Israel's conduct up to the apostasy to Baal-peor. Moreover the words **the grace** *of thy youth* and **thy going** *after me* can refer only to the bride.

3. and *the firstfruits of his increase*] Render: *Israel* **is an offering consecrated to Jehovah, His firstfruits of increase.** The firstfruits were God's consecrated property, His portion of the whole harvest. In Lev. xxii. 10 the very word is applied to them, translated *holiness* in this passage. The second clause explains the first.

all that devour him shall offend] In Lev. xxii. 10 the command is given that none but priests and their families may eat the firstfruits, as being holiness, *i.e.* a consecrated thing: and in *v.* 16 we are told that if any common person ate of them, he would incur the iniquity of *âshâm*, there translated *trespass*, lit. *guiltiness*. Now this is the word used here, **all that eat him shall incur guilt,** *âshâm*. Heathen, *i.e.* unconsecrated nations, must not meddle with Israel, because it is the nation consecrated to God. If they do, they will bring such guilt upon themselves as those incur who eat the firstfruits.

iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

6 Neither said they, Where *is* the
[c] Isai. 63. 9, 11, 13. Hos. 13. 4. LORD that [c] brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?

7 And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye [d] defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. [d] Psal. 78. 58. & 106. 38.

8 The priests said not, Where *is* the LORD? and they that handle the [e] law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* do not profit. [e] Rom. 2. 20.

9 ¶ Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead.

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5. *What iniquity...*] Rather, **injustice, unrighteousness**, the word *âvel* being the opposite of *tsedek, righteousness*, the great attribute of God.

vanity] See note on 1 K. xvi. 13, and for *vain*, Rom. i. 21.

6. *the wilderness*] Jeremiah dwells at length upon the features of the region wherein Israel had been miraculously supported for forty years. He calls it, first, a wilderness, *midbar*, but such were merely high table-lands, where the flocks could pasture, and which even had their "pleasant places" (ch. xxiii. 10), though liable to be dried up in the hot season. It is next *a land of deserts*, of flat wastes of sand, like the Arâbâh stretching from Tekoah towards Babylon, or from Jericho to the Red Sea. (See note on 2 S. ii. 29.) It was moreover *a land of pits*, full of rents and fissures, and deep waterless valleys, edged with rugged ledges of rock, through which travelling was dangerous. It was a *land of drought*, and therefore a land *of the shadow of death*; for if sickness delayed the traveller, or his supplies were by any accident exhausted, there being no springs or wells of water and no vegetation, death was inevitable. It was therefore a land utterly solitary, *that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt*. The Hebr. for *man* in the first clause is *ish*, man in his strength: in the latter *adam*, any man or woman, any member of the whole human race. Modern researches have shewn that this description applies only to limited portions of the route of the Israelites through the Sinaitic peninsula. On the *shadow of death*, see Note at end of Chapter.

7. *a plentiful country*] Literally, *a land of the Carmel*, **a Carmel land**. Carmel properly signifies *vineland*, but was especially applied to a hill in the tribe of Ashur, for which, see note on 1 K. xviii. 19. For its metaphorical use, see notes on Isai. x. 18, xvi. 10, xxxvii. 24.

8. *The priests...*] The guilt of this idolatry is now ascribed to the four ruling classes: "See," says St Chrysostom, "the evil springs from the head." Of these the priests are named first, because if they had done their duty, the apostasy would never have become national. The accusation brought against them is indifference: *they said not, Where is the* LORD? as though the fault laid to the charge of the whole people in *v.* 6 had resulted from their bad example. Next in influence are *they that handle the law*. These also belonged to the priestly class, whose office it was to teach God's judgments to the people (Deut. xxxiii. 10). Their offence was that *they knew not God*. While administering His law, they in practice forgot Him, and "judged for reward" (Mic. iii. 11). The third class are *the pastors* or shepherds, that is the temporal rulers: the Targum even renders it *kings*. From our modern use of pastors for those who have the spiritual oversight of the flock, its meaning in the Old Test. is frequently misunderstood; for there, as in Homer, it is the kings who are ποιμένες λαῶν (1 K. xxii. 17; Ezek. xxxiv. 2). Their crime is disobedience. The words here translated *transgressed against me* are more adequately rendered in Isai. i. 2, **have rebelled** *against me*. The fourth class are *the prophets*. It was their business to press the moral and spiritual truths of the law home to the hearts of the people: but they drew their inspiration from Baal, the Sun-god. Upon the corruption of the prophetic order at this time, see note on ch. xiv. 13.

things that *do not profit*] This in the Hebr. idiom means things baleful and pernicious, here idols, which are not merely unreal, but injurious. See 1 S. xii. 21; Isai. xliv. 9.

9. *I will...plead*] The Hebr. word is that used of the plaintiff setting forth his accusation in a law-court (see note on Job xxxiii. 13).

with you] With the present generation, who by joining in Manasseh's apostasy have openly violated Jehovah's covenant.

with your children's children] The present

10 For pass ‖ over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

11 Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which *are* ᶠ yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for *that which* doth not profit.

12 Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.

13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the ᵍ fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

14 ¶ *Is* Israel a servant? *is* he a homeborn *slave?* why is he † spoiled?

15 The young lions roared upon him, *and* † yelled, and they made his land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant.

‖ Or, *over to.*

ᶠ chap. 16. 20.

ᵍ Psal. 36. 9. chap. 17. 13. & 18. 14.

† Heb. become *a spoil?*

† Heb. *gave out their voice.*

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generation with their ancestors and descendants form the nation regarded as a whole. The fathers made it what it now is, the children will receive it such as the present generation are now making it to be, and God will judge it according as the collective working of the past, the present, and the future tends to good or to evil.

10. *the isles of Chittim*] See note on Kittim, Gen. x. 4.

Kedar] See on Gen. xxv. 13; Ps. cxx. 5; Song of Sol. i. 5. Here Kedar signifies the whole east, and the isles of Chittim the west. If then you traverse all lands from west to east, it will be impossible to find any nation guilty of such apostasy as that committed by Israel.

11. *a nation*] The word properly means a Gentile nation, and is in strong antithesis to *people*, the special appellation of Israel (Isai. i. 3).

their glory] Though the worship of the one true God is a nation's greatest glory, yet it is irksome because it puts a constraint on human passions doubly. For, first it requires obedience to a law revealed from above, and next it endeavours to raise man to something higher than the mere level of human nature. Hence a true religion awakens an antagonism in man's heart, as naturally as a false religion pleases and soothes it.

that which *doth not profit*] The natural antithesis to *their glory* would be *their shame* (iii. 24, xi. 13), but as the prophet's argument is that God has been true to the terms of the covenant, and granted temporal prosperity to Israel, whenever it served Him faithfully, he contrasts with this the calamities (see *v.* 8) which have ever resulted from idol-worship.

12. *Be astonished*] The A. V. uses this word in its old sense as equivalent to *be stupefied*, deprived for the time of sense.

be ye very desolate] The verb means *to be dry*, and may very well retain here its primary signification. In horror at Israel's conduct the heavens shrivel and dry up. This appeal is modelled upon Deut. xxxii. 1; Isai. i. 2, but is made more forcible.

13. *two evils*] The heathen are guilty of but one sin, idolatry: the covenant people commit two, in that they abandon the true God to serve idols.

the fountain of living waters] The Hebr. word *makôr* does not mean a spring or natural fountain, but a tank or reservoir dug in the ground (see ch. vi. 7), and chiefly intended for storing living waters, *i.e.* those of springs and rivulets.

cisterns] The *bôr* or cistern was used for storing up rain-water only, and therefore the quantity it contained was limited. But these cisterns are also *broken*, have fractures and rents in them, through which the water wastes. In such a ruined tank Benaiah slew a lion in time of snow, *i.e.* in the interval between the early and latter rain (2 S. xxiii. 20).

14. Is *Israel a servant?*] It was Israel's glory to be Jehovah's servant (ch. xxx. 10), and slaves born in the house were more prized than those bought with money as being more faithful (Gen. xiv. 14). Servants, in our use of the term, in ancient days there were none, but slaves only; and these formed part of the family, and were expressly admitted to the privileges of the covenant by circumcision. In default of children a slave might be his master's heir (Gen. xv. 3); by his good conduct he would rank with the children (Prov. xvii. 2), and might even rise so high as to rule over princes (ib. xix. 10). And thus then if Israel is a slave, he is a member of Jehovah's family. If he is one born in the house, he may expect kindness, as well as protection. Cannot Jehovah guard His own household? How happens it that a member of so powerful a family is spoiled? In the next verse the prophet gives the reason. Israel is a runaway slave, who has deserted the family to which he belongs by right of birth, and thereby brought upon himself trouble and misery.

Others take *servant* in a bad sense. Can it be that the son, the first-born (Exod. iv. 22), has become a slave? But this interpretation does not explain why Israel is spoiled, *i.e.* made the prey and booty of others.

15. *The young lions roared upon him*] Ra-

16 Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes [1] have broken the crown of thy head.

17 Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when he led thee by the way?

18 And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

19 Thine own [h] wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil *thing* and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear *is* not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

[1] Or, *feed on thy crown*, Deut. 33. 12. Isai. 8. 8.

[h] Isai. 3. 9. Hos. 5. 5.

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ther, with Graf and Keil, **against him**. The verse implies that Israel has run away from his master's house, but only to find himself exposed to the beasts of prey in the wilderness.

they made his land waste] Leaving the metaphor, by which so much had been said in few words, the prophet points to the actual results of Israel's apostasy. Not only had Israel been wasted, till the multiplication of wild beasts rendered human life unsafe (2 K. xvii. 25), but the Assyrian invasions had reduced Judæa to almost as sad a state.

burned] See Note at end of Chapter.

16. *Also the children of Noph*] Rather, **Even**. Noph, *i.e.* Napata, a town situated in the extreme south of Egypt. See Lenormant, 'Les Prem. Civilisations,' II. 276. The LXX. and the Coptic version however take it to be Memphis; see note on Isai. xix. 13.

Tahapanes] The name is spelt here *Tachpanes*, for which the Masorites have substituted the more usual form *Tachpanches*, softened down by our translators to Tahapanes. In Greek it is called Tafnê, or Daphnæ Pelusii, and was a border town towards Palestine.

have broken the crown of thy head] Literally, *shall depasture thee as to the crown of thy head, i.e.* **shall depasture the crown of thy head.** The metaphor is not uncommon. Elsewhere Jeremiah compares kings with their armies to shepherds with their flocks (ch. vi. 3); and shepherds destroy God's vineyard (ch. xii. 10). So in Micah v. 6 we read that shepherds shall *waste* the land with the sword, the word rendered *waste* being the very word used here, *depasture*. Moreover to depasture the crown of the head is to make it bald, and baldness was accounted by the Jews as a sign of disgrace (2 K. ii. 23; Jer. xlviii. 45), and was also a mark of mourning (Isai. xv. 2, xxii. 12). The Egyptians in slaying Josiah, and capturing Jerusalem, brought ruin, disgrace, and sorrow upon the Jews. On the rendering of the A.V. *broken*, see Note at end of Chapter.

17. *Hast thou not procured this unto thyself*] The general meaning of the verse is plain, that all Israel's troubles were the result of her sins, but the translation is difficult. The simplest construction is that of the LXX. *Hath not thy forsaking Jehovah procured thee this?*

when he led thee by the way] The way may mean the journey through the wilderness. The sin of the parents in worshipping Aaron's calf and Baal-peor, repeated in their children, has caused the nation's ruin. Many, however, prefer Kimchi's interpretation, who, from Ps. xxv. 8, explains it of the way of holiness.

18. *in the way of Egypt*] What business is it of thine to go to Egypt?—God has a way in which He leads His people—it is the way *from* Egypt. To lean on Egypt was a violation of the principles of the theocracy, which required God's people to be an independent power, firmly closed against all foreign influences.

to drink the waters] The metaphor was suggested by *v.* 13. Here the two rivers are the two empires, and to drink their waters is to adopt their principles and religion. Cp. also Isai. viii. 6, 7.

Sihor] The Nile. Originally it was the name of the border stream between Palestine and Egypt (Josh. xiii. 3).

Assyria] As Jeremiah would quickly be aware that Nineveh had fallen before the armies of Cyaxares and Nabopalassar, the mention of Assyria has been made a difficulty. But this prophecy was probably written before Nineveh fell, and even if not, Jeremiah's argument is throughout historical, and he would have in view such acts as those recorded in 2 K. xv. 19, xvi. 7, xvii. 3, and which Hosea had expressly condemned (Hos. v. 13, vii. 11, viii. 9, &c.). No prophet knew so well, and so constantly bore in mind, the words of his predecessors as Jeremiah.

19. *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee*] Shall *chastise* thee. Thy alliances with foreign powers shall bring thee only trouble and not safety.

and that my fear...] *My fear, i.e.* the fear of me. This word is rightly regarded by the A. V., following St Jerome, as carrying on the idea of the preceding noun *thy forsaking me*, and therefore the word *that* is properly inserted before it.

20 ¶ For of old time I have broken thy yoke, *and* burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not [1] transgress; when [2] upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot.

21 Yet I had [k] planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

22 For though thou [l] wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, *yet* thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD.

23 How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know

[1] Or, *serve.*
[2] Isai. 57. 5, 7. chap. 3. 6.
[k] Exod. 15. 17. Psal. 44. 2. & 80. 8. Isai. 5. 1, &c. Matth. 21. 33. Mark 12. 1. Luke 20. 9.
[l] Job 9. 30.

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20. *I will not transgress*] Rather, *I will not* **serve** (marg.). The word rendered *I will not transgress* is a correction of the Masorites, and therefore not of primary authority. As the two previous verbs are capable of being taken in the second person sing., many modern commentators with the LXX. and Vulg. translate, *For from of old thou hast broken thy yoke, thou hast burst thy bonds, and hast said, I will not serve.* But if the Masorites, who represent the traditional interpretation of the Jews in Palestine, had known of so simple a reudering, they would not have had recourse to so strong a measure as to change the reading. If however we understand the *yoke* and *bonds* as referring to the slavery in Egypt from which Jehovah freed Israel, the first person, as found in the A. V., gives a good sense. *For of old time I* Jehovah *broke thy yoke, I burst thy bonds*, not that thou mightest be free to do thy own will, but that thou mightest serve me: *and thou saidst, I will not serve.*

when] **For.** The Hebr. particle used here properly introduces the proof of any assertion. The translation *when* is an attempt to make sense of the corrupted text of the Masorites.

thou wanderest] Rather, *Under every leafy tree thou* **layest thyself down as a harlot.** The verb, which occurs elsewhere in Scripture only thrice, is used here in a metaphorical sense, to indicate the eagerness with which she prostrates herself before the objects of her idolatrous worship.

21. *a noble vine*] Properly, *a Sorek vine* (Isai. v. 2). It produced the red wine spoken of in Prov. xxiii. 31, and its lasting reputation is shewn by its being the vine mentioned by Jacob in Judah's blessing (Gen. xlix. 11).

wholly a right seed] Literally, *wholly a seed of truth, i.e.* true, genuine seed, not mixed with weeds, nor with seed of an inferior quality, but all of it a καλὸν σπέρμα, like that sown by Christ in the field of His Church (Matt. xiii. 24).

how then art thou turned] The general sense is plain enough, though there are grammatical difficulties in the Hebrew text, which have led to many attempts at emending it. None of these are satisfactory, and Keil has shewn that the grammar is not incapable of explanation. Retaining the present text, the right translation probably is, *How then* **hast thou changed thyself** *unto me into the degenerate* **branches** *of a strange vine? Unto me, i.e.* to my hurt or vexation. **Branches,** not *plant.* The stock, which was God's planting, was genuine, and of the noblest sort: the wonder was how such a stock could produce shoots of a totally different kind, such as Moses describes in Deut. xxxii. 32.

22. *though thou wash thee with nitre*] Or, **natron**, a mineral alkali, found in Egypt in the Nile valley, where, at the so-called natron lakes, it effloresces upon the rocks and surfaces of the dykes, and in old time was carefully collected, and used to make lye for washing (see Prov. xxv. 20).

soap] *Borith*, a vegetable alkali, now called *potash*, because obtained from the ashes of plants. Its combination with oils, &c. to form soap was not known to the Hebrews till long after Jeremiah's time, but they used the lye, formed by passing water through the ashes. Thus then, though Israel use both mineral and vegetable alkalies, the most powerful detergents known, yet will she be unable to wash away the stains of her apostasy.

thine iniquity is marked] *i.e.* as a stain. This is what our translators meant, but the word has since then changed its meaning.

23. *How canst thou say...?*] In their defence of themselves (cp. *v.* 35), the people probably appealed to the maintenance of the daily sacrifice, and the Mosaic ritual: and even more confidently perhaps to Josiah's splendid restoration of the temple, and to the suppression of the open worship of Baal. All such pleas availed little as long as the rites of Molech were still privately practised. The secret of the fascination of these rites, which to us seem so unnatural, is given in Micah vi. 7.

see thy way in the valley] *i.e.* of ben-Hinnom. Upon this valley see ch. vii. 32, and note on 2 K. xxiii. 10. From the time of Ahaz it had been the seat of the worship of Molech, and the prophet more than once identifies Molech with Baal (ch. xix. 5, xxxii. 35). See note on Lev. xx. 2. *Way* is of course put metaphorically for *conduct, doings.*

what thou hast done: ‖ *thou art* a swift dromedary traversing her ways;

24 ‖ A wild ass † used to the wilderness, *that* snuffeth up the wind at † her pleasure; in her occasion who can † turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.

25 Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, ‖ There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.

26 As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets,

27 Saying to a stock, Thou *art* my father; and to a stone, Thou hast ‖ brought me forth: for they have turned † *their* back unto me, and not *their* face: but in the time of their [m] trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

28 But where *are* thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they [n] can save thee in the time of thy † trouble: for [o] *according to* the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

29 Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD.

30 In vain have I [p] smitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath [q] devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

31 ¶ O generation, see ye the word

‖ Or, *O swift dromedary.*
‖ Or, *O wild ass, &c.*
† Heb. *taught.*
† Heb. *the desire of her heart.*
‖ Or, *reverse it?*
‖ Or, *Is the case desperate?*
‖ Or, *begotten me.*
† Heb. *the hinder part of the neck.*
[m] Isai. 26. 16.
[n] Isai. 45. 20.
† Heb. *evil.*
[o] chap. 11. 13.
[p] Isai. 9. 13. chap. 5. 3.
[q] Matth. 23. 29, &c.

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thou art *a swift dromedary*] *Swift* is not merely the usual epithet of the dromedary, but expresses here the vehemence of her actions. *Bicrah* is a young female dromedary, which has never yet had a foal, and to which Israel, always collectively described as a female, is compared.

traversing her ways] **Interlacing** *her ways*, running backwards and forwards. *Seroch* is a shoe-string, the tie of a sandal (Gen. xiv. 23), and the verbal form (*mesarecheth*) derived from it, found only in this place, describes the tangled mazes of the dromedary's course, as she runs hither and thither in the heat of her passion.

24. *A wild ass used to the wilderness*] The type of an untamed and reckless nature. See notes on Gen. xvi. 12; Job xi. 12, xxxix. 5; also Note at end of Chapter.

that *snuffeth up the wind*] The wind brings with it the scent of the male (cp. Virg. 'Georg.' III. 251). Israel does not wait till temptation comes of itself, but looks out for any and every incentive to idolatry. The idea is repeated in the rest of the verse.

in her occasion...in her month] *i.e.* at the pairing season.

25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod*] This has been variously interpreted. Schmidt understands it of the being led captive barefoot, the sure result of apostasy from God. Hitzig argues that the going barefoot was an act of adoration. Far better, however, is Umbreit's view. God the true husband exhorts Israel not to run barefoot, and with parched throat, like a shameless adulteress, after strangers.

27. *to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth*] Stone being fem. in Hebr. is represented as the mother.

Arise, and save us] Whether it be idolatry or infidelity, it satisfies only in tranquil and prosperous times. No sooner does trouble come, than the deep conviction of the existence of a God, which is the witness for Him in our heart, resumes its authority, and man prays.

28. *where* are *thy gods that thou hast made thee?*] A question of bitter irony. Thou usedst to *make* gods: what has become of thy store of deities? Things are made for some use. Now then is the time for thy deities to prove themselves real by being useful.

according to *the number...*] When every city has its special deity, surely among so many there might be found one able to help his worshippers. The force of the irony is thus intensified.

O Judah] Hitherto the argument had been addressed to Israel: suddenly the prophet applies the whole force of it to Judah, charges her with the habitual practice of idolatry, and points to the conclusion, that as Jerusalem has been guilty of Samaria's sin, it must suffer Samaria's punishment.

30. *your own sword hath devoured your prophets*] An allusion probably to Manasseh (2 K. xxi. 16). Josephus, 'Ant.' X. 3 § 1, tells us that both the prophets, and religious men generally, were put to death in large numbers by this relentless king. But death was the usual fate of the true prophet (Neh. ix. 26; Matt. xxiii. 37).

31. *O generation, see ye*] The pronoun

of the LORD. [r] Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, [l] We are lords; we will come no more unto thee?

32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, *or* a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.

34 Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by [t] secret search, but upon all these.

35 Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

36 Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.

37 Yea, thou shalt go forth from

[r] ver. 5.

[l] Heb. *We have dominion.*

[t] Heb. *digging.*

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belongs to *generation*, and not to the verb *see*. *O generation* **that ye are!** It is an exclamation of indignation at their hardened resistance to God. Less satisfactory is Ewald's exposition, who understands it as an appeal to the young, *O you, the present generation!*

Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?] *Midbar* (see *v.* 7), the thankless upland soil of the table-land.

a land of darkness] This word is written in Hebr. with two accents, as being a compound, signifying not merely darkness, but *the darkness of Jehovah*, *i.e.* very great darkness (see note on *Shalhebeth-Jah*, Song of Sol. viii. 6, and 1 S. xiv. 15 marg.; Ps. xxxvi. 6 marg. &c.). Ewald, in his grammar (§ 270 c), explains the form differently, but still gives it an intensive meaning.

We are lords] This is the Jewish interpretation, but modern lexicons render it **We rove about**, wander about at our will, go where we like. With them agree the ancient versions, excepting only the LXX., *e.g.* the Targum, *We have departed;* the Syriac, *We have gone down;* and the Vulg., *recessimus.* The verb also occurs in Gen. xxvii. 40, "When thou shalt rove at will;" see Ges. 'Thes.' p. 1269, where it is rendered "cum libere vagaberis:" in Hos. xi. 12, "Judah wandereth from God;" and in Ps. lv. 2, where see note.

32. *her attire*] The word rendered *headbands* in Isai. iii. 20, and there explained in the note as signifying *sashes*. So Jerome here "fascia pectoralis," and the LXX. στηθοδεσμίς.

my people have forgotten me] A bride fondly treasures all life through the girdle, which first indicated that she was a married woman, just as brides now the wedding ring; but Israel, Jehovah's bride (*v.* 2), cherishes no fond memorials of past affection.

33. *Why trimmest thou thy way*] Literally, *Why makest thou thy way good*, a phrase commonly used of persons amending their ways (ch. vii. 3, 5), but here of the pains taken by the Jews to learn the idolatries of foreign nations.

the wicked ones...] Or, *therefore thou hast taught* **thy ways wickednesses**. Judah makes good her ways, only to teach them unholy practices.

34. *Also in thy skirts is found the blood*...] This sentence is difficult in the Hebr., but there is no sufficient reason for disturbing the A. V. *Blood of souls* is an awkward rendering, but by souls are meant living persons, and the word is even translated *persons* in Ezek. xvii. 17. For *skirts* see Note at end of Chapter.

I have not found it by secret search] Rather, **thou didst not find them breaking into thy house**. The verb is capable of being taken either in the first, or second person, but as the passage refers to the law in Exod. xxii. 2 (where see note), by which a thief caught in the act of breaking into a house might be killed upon the spot, the second person is alone admissible. The meaning therefore is, that these poor innocents had committed no crime: they were not thieves caught in the act, whom the law permitted men to slay, and therefore Israel in killing them was guilty of murder. Calvin remarks that the one crime here of theft is put for crime generally. See Note at end of Chapter.

but upon all these] Or, **but because of all this**. So Hitzig, Graf, Keil, &c. Thou killedst the poor innocents, not for any crime, but because of this thy lust for idolatry.

35. *Yet thou sayest*] Or, **And thou saidst**. Cp. *v.* 23. *And* is here expressive of astonishment.

Because I am innocent] Rather, **But** *I am innocent*, or more literally, *I am acquitted.* Those blood-stains cannot be upon my skirts, because now, in good king Josiah's days, the idolatry of Manasseh has been put away.

surely his anger shall turn from me] Or, **has turned away** *from me*. This clause is not the result of Israel's assumed innocence,

him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

as the A. V. takes it, but is a continuation of the argument in the previous part of the verse.

Behold, I will plead with thee] Or, *Behold, I will* **enter into judgment** *with thee*. The verb rendered *plead* is not that used in *vv.* 9, 29, but one which expresses the act of the judge rather than that of the plaintiff.

36. *Why gaddest thou about so much*] This forcible interpretation is gathered from the general sense. The verb simply means *Why goest thou so much*, why travellest thou about so much? See Note at end of Chapter.

to change thy way] It was the principle of the theocracy to depend upon no foreign alliance. But the rival parties at Jerusalem looked one to Assyria, the other to Egypt, for safety. As one or other for the time prevailed, the nation *changed its way*, sending its embassies now eastward to Nineveh, now westward to Memphis.

thou also...] The *also* belongs to Egypt, the words literally being **also of Egypt** *shalt thou be ashamed*. This was literally fulfilled by the failure of the attempt to raise the siege of Jerusalem, ch. xxxvii. 5.

as thou wast ashamed of Assyria] Cp. 2 Chro. xxviii. 21; Isai. vii., viii.

37. *Yea, thou shalt go forth from him*] **From it**, from this Egypt, which though fem. as a land, yet as a people may be used as a masc. (cp. xlvi. 8). Now that Nineveh is trembling before the armies of Cyaxares and Nabopalassar, thou hastenest to Egypt, hoping to rest upon her strength: but slowly and miserably shalt thou retrace thy steps, with thy hands clasped upon thy head, disgraced and discarded.

thy confidences] Those, that is, in whom thou confidest.

in them] Literally, *for them*, with respect to them.

NOTES on CHAP. II. 6, 15, 16, 24, 34, 36.

6. *The shadow of death.* Modern commentators generally follow the authority of Abulwalid in writing *tsalmûth* for *tsalmaveth* (צַלְמָוֶת for צַלְמָוֶת), and so identify it with an Arabic word ظُلْمَة, *tsulmat*, signifying *darkness*. But the form *tsalmuth* is objectionable, and the explanation of the Hebrew by the Arabic has proved hitherto a fruitful source of error. Moreover all the ancient versions support the Masorites in regarding the word as a compound signifying *the shadow of death*, and such a meaning admirably suits the present passage, as in so arid a waste the fear of perishing by thirst ever hung like a dark shadow over the mind of the traveller. (See note on Job iii. 5.)

15. The rendering *burned* is uncertain. The Hebr. word may come from יצת, or from צת, and will then have the meaning given it in the A.V.; but most modern commentators, except Keil and Nägelsb., form it from נצה, and if so, the meaning is, *his cities* **are levelled to the ground**. In any case the C'tib נְצָתָה is to be preferred to the Kri נְצָתוּ. See Ewald, 'Gr.' 317 a, Ges. 'Lehrgeb.' 714.

16. The Syriac version, unable to make sense of this passage, was the first to derive the verb from a root signifying to *break* (רעע), and the A.V. has adopted this translation. The LXX. and Vulg. have a slightly different reading (יְרֹעוּךְ), *have known thee, i.e.* have polluted thee by their idolatry: but this is not the sense required. Fürst and other moderns derive the verb from the right root (רעה), but gratuitously give it the sense of breaking. The only tenable translation is that given in the footnote, first suggested by Luther.

24. The form פֶּרֶה occurs only here, but there is no reason for pointing it פָּרָה with St Chrysostom, who renders *ὡς δάμαλις, like a heifer*. For first, the Targ., Syr. and Vulg. all take it as equivalent to פֶּרֶא *a wild-ass:* next, the participle לִמֻּד, literally *taught*, is masc., but פָּרָה is fem.; and lastly, *used to the wilderness* is a natural epithet of the wild-ass (Job xxxix. 6), but not of a heifer.

34. For *in thy skirts*, בכנפיך, the LXX. and Syriac read *on thy palms, i.e.* hands, בכפיך.

By secret search, marg. *digging*. This is the right meaning, but like our Lord's word *διορύσσω* in the Gospels, it means digging through the walls of a house, for the purpose of breaking into it. So in Wilson's 'Hindu Theatre,' Vol. I. p. 63, we read, "The god of thieving has taught four methods of breaching a house: picking out burnt bricks; cutting through unbaked ones; throwing water on a mud wall; and boring through one of wood:" In Palestine, walls of the second and third kind would have been dug through. See on Job xxiv. 16. The verb remained in use in Judæa for many centuries after the Christian era, being used in the

Jerusalem Gospel-book to translate the passage in Matt. xxiv. 43 ('Evangel. Hieros.' ed. Minisc. Erizzo, Verona, 1863). The last words of this verse are difficult. Instead of אֵלֶּה, *these*, the LXX. and Syriac read אֵלָה, an *oak* or *terebinth;* the former rendering *upon every oak*, as if the innocents had fled to the trees for refuge; the latter *under every tree*, understanding the passage of the children sacrificed in the groves, the scenes of their idolatries. Jerome also adds *sub quercu*. Neither interpretation is satisfactory, and still less so is the attempt of many modern commentators to join these words to the next verse, and translate *Yet with, i.e.* in spite of, *all this thou saidst*. The rendering given in the footnote is the least forced.

36. The LXX., Syr., and Vulg. translate *How vile thou hast become! i.e.* they read תָּזֹלִי from זלל; but most modern commentators accept the punctuation of the Masorites, namely תְּזֻלִי for תְּאֻזְלִי from אזל *to go*.

CHAPTER III.

1 God's great mercy in Judah's vile whoredom. 6 Judah is worse than Israel. 12 The promises of the gospel to the penitent. 20 Israel reproved, and called by God, maketh a solemn confession of their sins.

[f] Heb. *Saying.*

[f] THEY say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, [a] Deut. 24. 4 and become another man's, [a] shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

2 Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

3 Therefore the [b] showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a [b] Deut. 28. 24. chap. 9. 12.

CHAP. III. 1. *They say*] Or, **That is to say.** The prophet has now completed his historical survey of Israel's conduct, and finally draws the conclusion that as an adulterous wife could not be taken back by her husband, so Israel has finally forfeited her part in the covenant with God. This conclusion he introduces by a word which literally means *to say*, but its somewhat harsh use has greatly troubled translators. St Jerome renders it *Vulgo dicitur*, "It is commonly said:" and similarly the A.V. "they say:" but no traces of such a use of the infinitive are found elsewhere in the language. Apparently the word only introduces the quotation from Deut. xxiv. 4, and if translated at all may be rendered as above, "that is to say," "to wit," or the like.

If a man put away his wife] A man who had once put away his wife was forbidden to take her again, if in the interval she had been married to another, because such a mixture of blood would pollute the land (Deut. xxiv. 4).

yet return again to me] Or, *and* thinkest thou *to return unto me!* The Syr., Vulg., and Targ. agree with the A.V. in taking the verb as an imperative, and Calvin defends this interpretation, arguing that though God had forbidden such conduct to man, yet that it was for a reason which did not affect His own dealings. Most modern commentators, however, take the verb as an infinitive, and render *And to return to me!* As this aposiopesis would be difficult to understand in our language, its force may be preserved by rendering "*And* thinkest thou *to return unto me!*" The whole argument is not of mercy, but is the proof that after her repeated adulteries, Israel could not again take her place as wife. To think of returning to God, with the marriage-law unrepealed, was folly.

2. *Lift up thine eyes...*] These words are not the language of consolation to the conscience-stricken, but of vehement expostulation with hardened sinners. They prove, therefore, the truth of the interpretation put upon the preceding verse.

the high places] More exactly, bare, treeless downs (see notes on Num. xxiii. 3; Isai. xli. 18).

In the ways hast thou sat for them] By the road-side, like Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 14. Cp. also Prov. vii. 12; Ezek. xvi. 25.

as the Arabian in the wilderness] The freebooting propensities of the Bedaween had passed in ancient times into a proverb (Diod. Sic. II. 48, Plin. 'Hist. Nat.' VI. 28, Strabo, XVI. 747), yet the Syr. and LXX. for *Arabian*, translate a *raven* (cp. 1 K. xvii. 4, 6); better the Vulg. *latro*, "a robber," which St Jerome explains of the Bedaween, who constantly infested the confines of Palestine. As eager then as the desert-tribes were for plunder, so was Israel for idolatry.

[c] chap. 6. 15. [c] whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou *art* the guide of my youth?

5 Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

6 ¶ The LORD said also unto me

4. *Wilt thou not*] Or, **Hast thou** *not from this time* **called** *me, My Father, thou art the* **husband** *of my youth?* "From this time," from the time of Josiah's reforms in his eighteenth year, in opposition to "of old time" in ch. ii. 20. *Husband*, literally an intimate familiar friend, but here, and in Prov. ii. 17, *a husband*. So the ordinary Hebr. word for "friend" means "a husband" in ch. iii. 20, and Hos. iii. 1.

5. *Will he reserve* his anger *for ever?*] Rather, *Will he*, the young husband, **retain**, keep up *His anger for ever?* The A.V. rightly understands "anger" after the verbs retain and keep, as in Ps. ciii. 9. These words should be joined to *v.* 4.

Behold, thou hast spoken...] Rather, *Behold, thou hast spoken* **thus, but thou hast** *done evil things* **persistently**. The A.V. so translates as if Judah's words and deeds were both evil. Really her words were fair, but her deeds proved them to be false. *Persistently* is literally "and thou couldest," *i.e.* wast able to practise these evil deeds, with no restraint of conscience nor fear of the divine law.

And here ends the prophecy, most interesting as shewing what was the general nature of Jeremiah's exhortations to his countrymen, during the fourteen years of Josiah's reign. He sets before them God and Israel united by a covenant of marriage, to the conditions of which Jehovah is ever true, while Israel practises with zest every form of idolatry. Therefore the divine blessing is withheld. When Ahaz makes molten images for Baalim, the armies of Pekah and Rezin quickly appear before the walls of Jerusalem, and the hearts of the men of Judah are shaken with terror, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. When Manasseh worships the host of heaven, he must soon hide him among the thorns, and go captive to Assyria. Once more, under Josiah, God gives them an opportunity for repentance. But they deny that they have sinned, and call God their Father, and the loving husband of the nation, at the very time when the women are kneading cakes for the Queen of Heaven, and the men sacrificing the poor innocents to Molech. It is an honest and manly warning, and the great lesson it teaches us is, that with God nothing avails but a real and heartfelt repentance followed by a life of holiness and sincere devotion to His service.

JEREMIAH'S THIRD PROPHECY.

Chaps. iii. 6—iv. 4.

The call to Repentance.

INTRODUCTION.—The former prophecy by itself would have been an insufficient exposition of God's method of dealing with mankind: for it contained no single word of mercy. It represented Judah as unwarned by Israel's punishment, and still unrepentant, either self-righteously justifying her past conduct, or arguing that Josiah's restoration of the temple-service was a sufficient expiation of it. But while granting that Judah's words were now fair, it ends with the assertion that her deeds were persistently evil. Under such circumstances pardon was impossible. Jerusalem must be besieged and taken, and the people go into exile as certainly as Samaria and the ten tribes had already suffered that fate. The only remedy was a real national repentance, and this the people would not; and so Jeremiah lived to see Jerusalem in flames, and the temple a heap of ruins. But God's threatenings are never final till men make them so (2 Cor. v. 11), and it was necessary now to shew that an alternative was possible. Jeremiah, therefore, makes the offer of pardon, if only they will repent. And though, as a nation, Judah did not avail herself of God's mercy, yet the appeals of this prophecy may have aided many individuals in seeking for themselves that grace which the rest refused (c. xxiv. 5—7).

It is plain that Jeremiah intended the two prophecies to be taken together, for not merely the same thoughts, but the same expressions run through both. Thus we have Israel's spiritual adultery in ch. iii. 8 answering to iii. 1; the worshipping stocks and stones in iii. 9, and ii. 27; the playing the harlot under every green tree in iii. 6, and ii. 20; the calling God her Father in iii. 19, and iii. 4; and her long forgetfulness of Him in iii. 21, and ii. 32. But while the former prophecy ended with the denunciation of God's perpetual anger because of Israel's obstinate persistence in sin, we find here an invitation to repentance, and the assurance of forgiveness (iii. 12).

The argument is as follows: Israel had been guilty of apostasy, and therefore God had put her away. Unwarned by this example her sister Judah still persists in the same sins, *vv.* 6—10; and is therefore the more guilty of the two, *v.* 11. Israel therefore is invited to return to the marriage-covenant by

in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which backsliding Israel hath done? she is [d] gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

[d] chap. 2. 20.

7 And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw *it*.

8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

9 And it came to pass through the [l] lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

[l] Or, *fame.*

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but [t] feignedly, saith the LORD.

[t] Heb. *in falsehood.*

11 And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

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repentance, *vv.* 12—14, in which case she and Judah, accepted upon the like condition, shall become joint members of a spiritual theocracy, *vv.* 15—18. Both however must confess their iniquity, *vv.* 19, 20; and this confession the prophet now seems to hear them make with many tears, *vv.* 21—25, and God accepts it, but warns them that their repentance must be no sowing among thorns, but a real circumcision of the heart, ch. iv. 1—4.

6. *The* LORD *said also*] By the use of the conjunction this prophecy is closely connected with the former, with which it combines into a whole.

backsliding Israel] The Hebr. word is properly a substantive, "apostasy," "the act of turning away from God." The original therefore is very strong: Hast thou seen Apostasy? that is, Israel: as though Israel were the very personification of the denial of God.

she is gone up] Rather, **she goes**. The verb is the present part. fem., often used in Hebr. to express any habitual practice.

7. *And I said...Turn thou unto me*] Better, *And I said, i.e.* within myself, I thought within myself, *After she has done all these things, she will return to me. But she did not return.* The Targum, and most modern expositors, take the verb thus as the third person fem. Grammatically it may also be the second person, and the A. V., Syr., LXX. and Vulg. so take it, *Thou shalt return to me*, equivalent to the imper. *Return unto me.* The words might then refer to God's warnings addressed to the ten tribes by Amos, Hosea, and Micah.

And her treacherous sister] Lit. *Falsehood, i.e.* **false**, faithless. See the note on *backsliding* in *v.* 6. The character of the two sisters is plainly marked. Samaria is apostate; she abandons Jehovah's worship altogether, in name and in reality. Judah maintains the outward show; but it is in form only, and her secret desires are set upon the orgies of heathen worship. Ezekiel probably founded his allegory of the two sisters in ch. xxiii. upon this passage.

8. *And I saw, when...*] Rather, *And I saw* **that because apostate** *Israel* **had** *committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her* **the writing of her divorcement**, *yet* **false** *Judah her sister feared not...* The pleonastic expression, *For all the causes whereby*, is probably the actual formula with which writings of divorcement commenced (Graf). The ancient versions differ very widely in their rendering of this verse.

9. *lightness*] See Note A at end of Chapter.

she defiled] Rather, **profaned**. The land specially consecrated to Jehovah's service was treated by Judah as a common land. See Note B at end of Chapter.

with stones...] See ch. ii. 27.

10. *her treacherous sister Judah*] The force of Jeremiah's argument has often been lost by commentators, from not perceiving that these words are a sort of refrain, thrice repeated before God finally pronounces Judah more culpable than Israel. Its proper arrangement is as follows:

Jehovah saith unto Jeremiah, Hast thou seen the spiritual adulteries of Apostasy, *i.e.* Israel, and her refusal to return unto me? *And Falsehood, her sister Judah*, saw it (*vv.* 6, 7). Yea! I Jehovah saw Israel adulterous and divorced, *and Falsehood, her sister Judah*, imitating without fear her wickedness (*v.* 8). Yea, Israel hath profaned her land, and therefore hath been removed from it; and yet for all this, *Falsehood, her sister Judah*, though witness, first, of Israel's persistence in idolatry, secondly, of her divorce, and finally, of the withdrawal of God's protection, yet has returned unto me only feignedly (*vv.* 9, 10).

11. *hath justified herself*] This then is Jehovah's final sentence, and the uprightness of it is grounded by Jeremiah chiefly upon the fact that Judah had had the benefit of the warning given by Israel's example: but he also con-

12 ¶ Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and* I will not cause mine anger to
[e]Psal. 86. 15. & 103. 8, 9. fall upon you: for I *am* [e]merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep *anger* for ever.

13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 And I will give you [f]pastors [f] chap. 23. according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of

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trasts their sins. Both abandon Jehovah's service for idolatry, but Israel is simply *apostate*, Judah is also *false*. See on *v.* 7.

The verse is further important, first as accounting for the destruction of Jerusalem so soon after the pious reign of Josiah. Manasseh's crimes had defiled the land, but it was by rejecting the reforms of Josiah that the people finally profaned it, and sealed their doom. Secondly as shewing that it is not by the acts of its government that a nation stands or falls. Ahaz and Manasseh lent the weight of their influence to the cause of idolatry: Hezekiah and Josiah to the cause of truth. But the nation had to determine which should prevail. Excepting a remnant it embraced idolatry, and brought upon itself ruin: in the remnant the nation again revived (ch. xxiv. 5, 7).

12. *toward the north*] To the ten tribes, who had been settled by Shalmanezer in the northern provinces of the Assyrian empire.

Return, thou backsliding] Literally, *Turn, thou that hast turned.* It is the noun rendered *apostasy* in *vv.* 8, 11. As Israel's former turning was away from God, this will be a returning to her covenant relations with Him.

I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you] So the Targum and Rashi, but wrongly. The Heb. literally is I WILL NOT CAUSE MY FACE *to fall upon you*, and this the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. rightly explain as meaning *I will not receive you with averted looks.* The *and* before this clause should be omitted, as also before the next clause, *I will not keep.*

I will not keep] As we know of no change in God's dealings with the ten tribes, Grotius calls this "an unfulfilled promise," and Neumann says lamely that, though not fulfilled to the nation, it perhaps was to individuals. Really, all God's promises and threats are conditional upon man's conduct.

13. *Only acknowledge*] Literally, *know thy iniquity*; know that thy doings are iniquitous.

against the LORD thy God] See Gen. xxxix. 9; Ps. li. 4; Luke xv. 18.

and hast scattered thy ways] Thou hast wandered in all directions in search of those idolatries which foreign nations practise. (See note on ch. ii. 3.)

14. *Turn, O backsliding children*] Literally, *Turn, ye sons who have turned away.* (See on *v.* 12.) They are still sons, not banished from, but who have themselves abandoned their father's house, and sure, if they will even now return to it, of a hearty welcome.

I am married unto you] A more exact writer would have avoided so mixed a metaphor. The confusion, however, is only verbal, and the twofold relationship gives a double certainty of acceptance. As children they were sure of a father's love, as a wife they might hope for a revival of past affection from the husband of their youth. Observe too that whereas in *v.* 1 God declares that the land would be profaned by the reunion of a divorced wife to her husband, yet He now invites Israel to return in spite of the sentence passed upon her in *v.* 8. See Note at end of Chapter.

one of a city, and two of a family] Contrary to our use of the word, the *family*, in Hebrew *mishpachah*, is far larger than a city, as it embraces all the descendants of a common ancestor. Thus the tribe of Judah was divided into only four or five families. However general or even national be the apostasy, it does not involve in its guilt the few who are faithful, and the promises are still their rightful possession.

and I will bring you to Zion] To the true Church. The fulfilment of the promise began with the return to Palestine of scattered members of the ten tribes after the Babylonian exile, but is complete only in Christianity.

15. *pastors*] *Kings, rulers*; cp. ii. 8, 26.

according to mine heart] Not military usurpers, such as Israel had chosen for itself (Hos. viii. 4), but true servants of God, such as was David (1 S. xiii. 14).

16. *in those days*] This and the equivalent phrase "the latter days," had become under the Messianic teaching of the prophets

the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it † come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit *it*; neither shall ‖ *that* be done any more.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the ‖ imagination of their evil heart.

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk ‖ with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have ‖ given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a † pleasant land, † a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away † from me.

† Heb. *come upon the heart.*
‖ Or, it *be magnified.*
‖ Or, *stubbornness.*
‖ Or, *to.*
‖ Or, *caused your fathers to possess.*
† Heb. *land of desire.*
† Heb. *an heritage of glory,* or, *beauty.*
† Heb. *from after me.*

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a regular formula for the time of Christ's coming, the time when all the nation's hopes would be fulfilled. (Cp. v. 18, xxxi. 1, xxxiii. 16; Hos. iii. 5, etc.)

The ark...] The ark was the centre of the Mosaic economy, containing within it the two tables of the law, as the conditions of the covenant, and having over it, upon the mercy-seat, the Shechinah as the visible sign of God's presence. But "in those days" the symbol must pass away, because God will then dwell in His people by the gift of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. iii. 16), and the terms of the covenant will be written on their hearts (ch. xxxi. 33). The completeness of the abolition is strongly marked. For first, *they shall not speak of it, neither shall it come to mind*, Heb. *come upon the heart*, which was often regarded by the Jews as the seat of the intellect: *neither shall they remember it*, so entire shall be the change in their way of thinking, that the idea of an ark shall never recur to their memory: *neither shall they visit it*, rather, *neither shall they miss it* (cp. use of verb in 1 S. xx. 6, xxv. 15, Isai. xxxiv. 16, etc.), *i.e.* they will not trouble about it, nor regret its loss. Finally, *neither shall that be done any more*, or *be magnified* (marg.). Rather, **neither shall it**, the ark, **be made any more**; it shall not be renewed or repaired, because the tabernacle of God will be one "made without hands" (Heb. ix. 11), even the heart of His believing people.

17. *At that time*] The latter days referred to in the previous verse.

the throne of the LORD] Jehovah's throne shall not be the ark, but Jerusalem, *i.e.* the Christian Church (Rev. xxi. 2; Gal. iv. 26; cp. also Zech. ii. 10, 11).

the nations] The Goïm, *i.e.* Gentile nations.

to Jerusalem] The LXX. and Syriac are probably right in omitting this word.

imagination...] **Stubbornness** (marg.). In Hebrew this word is always used in a bad sense, for *obstinacy*, though often put in the cognate dialects for *firmness, constancy*. The rendering of the A.V. is taken from the LXX. τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων, which is rather a paraphrase than a translation.

18. *In those days*] Cp. v. 16. The repetition is emphatic, pointing onwards to the days of the Messiah.

with] **To** (marg.). The right translation of the preposition is important. *They shall walk* **to** *the house of Israel.* The prophet has just described the return of the ten tribes, who are to be brought back to Zion (v. 14), and of the Gentiles, who are to make Jerusalem their home (v. 17): if Judah repent she cannot possibly be left out. But Israel is represented as the first to repent, and Judah must go to her, in order that they may *come together* back to the Holy Land, divided no longer into Jews and Israelites, but merged into one people.

out of the land of the north] Hitzig and others object that the Jews were not carried captive like the Israelites into the northern provinces of Assyria (v. 12), but into Babylonia. But the objection misinterprets the whole prophecy, the gist of which is that in case of Israel's repentance, Judah must humbly seek her out, and be content henceforward to take the inferior place, as having been the more guilty (see v. 11).

19. *But I*] Rather, **And I**. There is no opposition between this and the preceding verse, and therefore *but* is erroneous. The *I* is written fully in the Hebrew, which is done only in cases where emphasis is required. The emphasis lies here in the abundant goodness of God contrasted with Israel's waywardness.

How...?] Rather, **How...!** *i.e.* How gloriously! With what honour will I place thee among the children! The A.V. takes the particle as an interrogative, to which the answer is given in the last half of the verse: but this is untenable. The clause has also been translated *How will I clothe thee with children!* (Cp. שִׂיחַ *clothing*, Prov. vii. 10.) And so the Targum. According to this interpretation the Gentiles would be the children with whom the true Israel is enriched. As, however, Israel is simply represented as God's

20 ¶ Surely *as* a wife treacherously departeth from her [†] husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

[†] Heb. *friend.*

21 A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping *and* supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, *and* they have forgotten the LORD their God.

22 [ε] Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God.

[ε] Hos. 14. 1.

23 Truly in vain *is salvation hoped for* from the hills, *and from* the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel.

24 For shame hath devoured the

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child in the rest of the verse, the rendering of the A.V. is to be preferred.

a pleasant land] Lit. *a land of desire* (marg.), **a desirable land.**

goodly...of the hosts...] Rather, *a heritage of the* **chief beauty** *of nations.* The words in the Hebr. are *tsebi tsiboth.* Of these *tsebi* means anything bright and glorious, and is thus applied by David to Saul and Jonathan—*the beauty of Israel* (2 S. i. 19), and to the Holy Land in Ezek. xx. 6, 15, etc. Further, as it is the Hebr. idiom to form a strong superlative by the repetition of the substantive in the pl. (cp. Ezek. xvi. 7 marg.), the literal translation of these words is *beauty of beauties*, and the general sense, that Israel possesses *the most beautiful territory of any nation.* The A. V. however, and most of the ancient versions, take *tsiboth* as equivalent to *tsebaoth*, *hosts.*

and I said] This clause is not the answer to a difficulty, as in the A. V., but completes the description of God's loving purpose. "I said within myself, that I would treat thee as a son, and give thee a glorious inheritance; I also said, that ye would return my love, would call me Father, and be untrue to me no more." In the original there is a change of number, How shall I put *thee*...And I said, *Ye* shall call...*ye* shall not turn away... that is, the thought changes from Israel as a collective noun to the persons who compose it. The LXX. and Syr. carefully preserve this change, but the A. V. follows the narrow grammatical precision of the Masorites in altering it to the sing. Really there is no difficulty in the prophet writing *My* Father, instead of *Our* Father, as it only signifies that they should each one call God My Father.

20. *Surely* as] Rather, **Just as.** The word in the Hebr. is a correlative particle answering to the word *so* in the corresponding clause.

from her husband] Lit. *from her friend* (see iii. 4, Lam. i. 2). The remembrance of Israel's past conduct rises unbidden in the mind to cross, like a dark cloud, this bright hope of Israel's return to God, of its consequent restoration to its place as a child, and of its filial love to Jehovah.

21. *A voice was heard upon the high places*] Upon those bare table-lands, which previously had been the scene of Israel's idolatries (*v.* 2). The prophet brushes away the passing doubt suggested in *v.* 20, and resumes the main thread of his discourse, the offer namely of mercy to Israel if repentant; this offer he supposes to have been accepted, and describes Israel's agony of grief now that she is convinced of her sins.

weeping and *supplications*] Lit. *the weeping of earnest prayers for mercy.*

for they have...] Rather, **because** *they have perverted their way*, lit. made it crooked. It gives the reason of their cry for mercy.

22. *Return...*] Lit. *Turn, ye turned children: I will heal your turnings* (*v.* 14). It is Jehovah's answer to their prayer in the previous verse, immediately followed by their acceptance of the offer of divine mercy. This repetition of the leading word is entirely in accordance with classical usage in the East.

for thou art the LORD our God] Rather, **because...** This profession of faith gives the reason why they return to Jehovah, just as the corresponding clause in *v.* 21 gave the reason for their sorrow. The whole description is most graphically conceived. The people weeping upon the hills: God's gracious voice bidding them return: the glad cry of the penitents exclaiming that they come: the profession of faith won from them by the divine love;—these form altogether a most touching picture of a national repentance.

23. *Truly in vain*] Rather, **Surely** *in vain from the hills* **is the revelry of the mountains.** The verse is difficult of translation from its extreme brevity, but its general sense is clear. The penitents contrast in it the uselessness of idol-worship with the salvation which Jehovah gives to His people. See Note at end of Chapter.

truly...] With these orgies, which result only in disappointment, *for falsehood*, the penitents contrast the worship of Jehovah, who bestows not sensual enjoyment, but *salvation*, spiritual health and deliverance.

24. *For...*] **And.** It is the continuation

labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

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of the thought in *v.* 23. Idolatry was there described as unprofitable, here as ruinous and hurtful.

shame] Lit. **the shame**, that is, *Baal*. Constantly we find the names *Bosheth*, *i.e. shame*, and *Baal*, interchanged. See note on Judg. vi. 32.

their flocks and their herds] Many commentators make a difficulty here. The worship of Jehovah, they say, required sacrifices of sheep and oxen quite as much as that of Baal. But Jehovah's sacrifices would no more reduce the people to poverty than men's charities do now under the Christian dispensation. The sacrifices were indeed feasts, and in most cases the flesh was eaten by the offerer and his friends, and formed almost the sole animal food of the people. But these temperate and sober enjoyments led to no excess, whereas in idol-worship the people, after sitting down "to eat and drink, rose up to play," and wasted both health and substance in licentious revelry.

their sons...] This has been explained of the gradual decrease of the population by hostile incursions, but it more probably refers to human sacrifices. The words do not necessarily imply that such sacrifices were numerous, but express the horror of the people at their having been offered at all.

25. *We lie down...*] Or, **We will lie down.** Overpowered by the misery occasioned by the remembrance of the shameful deeds wrought by us when worshipping these base idols, we are ready to throw ourselves upon the ground in the attitude of bitter humiliation.

our confusion covereth] Lit. **shall cover us.** Unable to meet the gaze of others (ch. li. 51), we will hide our face from them.

against the LORD...] Cp. *v.* 13.

NOTES on CHAP. III. 9, 14, 23.

NOTE A on *v.* 9.

The A.V. in translating *lightness* follows the ancient versions, which take קֹל as infin. of קָלַל = levity. Israel regards her idolatry as a light matter, *ἐς οὐδέν*, a thing of no account, as the LXX. render it. In the margin, however, it gives the word its usual meaning (קֹל = קוֹל, vox, fama). *It came to pass through the fame of her whoredom, i.e.* through her infamous idolatry.

Various emendations have also been suggested; thus Ewald renders *shame* (קָלוֹן = קֹל); Michaelis reads מַקֵּל, *baculus, a staff*, for מִקֹּל, which he and Hitzig explain either of the divining rod (Hosea iv. 12; Eccles. xi. 3, see Preston, 'Makamat of Hariri,' p. 204), or of the stock of wood which they worshipped. The rendering of the A.V. *lightness* is far best, though both Keil and Nägelsb. prefer "the 'cry, noise, of her whoredom," her idolatry which cries to heaven against her.

NOTE B on *v.* 9.

As the text now stands it means *she was profaned as to the land*. But as most ancient versions agree with the A.V., and *land* is certainly in the accusative (having אֵת before it), it is better to correct the punctuation of the Masorites, and read וַתַּחֲנֵף, instead of וַתֶּחֱנַף.

14. *for I am married unto you.* The right meaning of these words is greatly disputed. Bâal (בָּעַל), *to marry*, is usually followed by the simple accusative of the person married, or by the prep. *to* (ל): but here alone and in ch. xxxi. 32 it is followed by the prep. *in* (ב). Ges. therefore, with Dahler, De Wette, &c., upon the authority of Kimchi and Abulwalid, explain it according to a supposed use of the parallel Arabic words (بعل ب) *although I have disdained you*, and certainly this sense suits the corresponding passage in ch. xxxi. 32. But on the other hand the Arabic phrase, itself questionable, becomes in Hebr. בָּחַל ב (see Zech. xi. 8): and the conjunction כִּי cannot be translated *although*, but must introduce the reason why they are to return, which can scarcely be God's disdain of them.

Hitzig, Neumann and others accept the rendering of the LXX. *κατακυριεύσω ὑμῶν, I will be your master*. This, no doubt, is the primary meaning of the word. But the ancient phrases for marriage were not very sentimental, and thus to be the Baal, *master, owner* of a woman, was to be her husband. This may explain the use of the prep. *in*, or *over:* to be lord in respect to her, or over her. The rendering of the LXX. therefore rather confirms than otherwise the translation

of the A.V. and Vulg., *for I am your husband.* And this rendering seems best, as it gives the particle כִּי its proper use of introducing the reason for their return.

NOTE on *v.* 23.

The translation of this verse will chiefly depend upon the meaning given to the word *hamon*, הֲמוֹן. In ch. lii. 15 we find the corresponding form אָמוֹן, *multitude*, used as equivalent to עָם, *people*, in ch. xxxix. 9. Elsewhere it more generally signifies a *confused sound*, as in 1 K. xviii. 41, of the splashing of rain; in Amos v. 23, of the noise of revelry. In either way we gain the sense attributed to it of old by the Jews themselves in the Targum, which explains it of the noisy gatherings for idol-worship on the hill-tops. The translation given in the footnote seems the best, that this mountain-revelry is *in vain*, or literally *for falsehood*, a much stronger expression. Ewald differs only in retaining the Masoretic punctuation, which the A. V. here deserts. He renders *In vain resounds from the hills revelry*, even *from the mountains.* Schnurrer thinks that *hamon* means wealth, and Gesenius follows him, translating *In vain from hills is wealth of mountains.* Hitzig agrees with the A. V. in rendering *the multitude* or host *of the mountains*, understanding by it the numerous false gods worshipped there.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *God calleth Israel by his promise.* 3 *He exhorteth Judah to repentance by fearful judgments.* 19 *A grievous lamentation for the miseries of Judah.*

IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, [a] return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove.

2 And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they [b] glory.

[a] Joel 2. 12.

[b] 2 Cor. 10. 17.

CHAP. IV. In the first four verses of this chapter we have the conclusion of both sides of the prophecy: to Israel first in *vv.* 1 and 2, in which God, upon the condition of their repentance, promises to accept them, and even use them in the evangelization of the world. To Judah in *vv.* 3 and 4. As in the rest of the prophecy, so here, the message to her is less of mercy than of warning. She is admonished that her repentance must be real, or she will quickly be visited with severe chastisement.

1. *If thou wilt return*] These words shew that the repentance of Israel described in iii. 21—25 was a hope, and not a reality. The return, literally, would be from captivity—their restoration to their land. Spiritually it would mean their abandoning their sins.

return unto me] Whether they wish to be restored to their land, or to escape from the yoke of their sins, it can only be by turning to the true God. The usual way with men as they grow older is to turn from one sin to another.

abominations] A usual word for idols (Matt. xxiv. 15). Everything that man takes in the place of God proves to himself *bosheth*, a shame (ch. iii. 24), and is to God an object of abhorrence.

then shalt thou not remove] Rather, **and wilt not wander.** It is the condition which God requires of true penitents.

2. *And thou shalt swear*] The A. V. makes this verse unintelligible. The phrase *The Lord liveth* is the regular form of the Jewish oath, and means, not the thing sworn to, but the thing sworn by—*By the life of Jehovah.* But every nation swears by the highest object of its worship (Deut. x. 20, etc.), and the prophecy that Egyptians should swear to Jehovah (Isai. xix. 18), implied their conversion to the true faith. Here, similarly, the oath is a confession of faith in Jehovah as the true God. The two verses make one affirmation, and should be translated as follows:

If thou wouldst return, O Israel,
saith Jehovah,
Unto me thou shalt return;
And if thou wouldst remove thy
abominations from before me,
And not wander to and fro,
But wouldst swear truly, uprightly,
and justly
By the living Jehovah;
Then shall the heathen bless themselves in him,
And in him shall they glory.

in righteousness] Ex parte jurantis. The cause must not only be just, but the evidence justly given. To conceal part of the evidence in the hope of gaining the cause for the right side (*i.e.* one's own side) violates this requirement.

in him] Many, following the Targum, understand this of Israel; better, in Jehovah, the God of Israel. Jeremiah, according to his wont, refers back to the earlier Scriptures, such as Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, &c. If Israel repents, it will become the means of making the Gentiles partakers in the patriarchal promise; which literally translated is, All the na-

3 ¶ For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.

4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my

tions *shall bless themselves* in thy seed (Gen. xxii. 18). Two great truths therefore are taught in this verse, the first, that the Gentiles were to be members of the Church of the Messiah; the second, that Israel's peculiar office was to be God's mediator in this great work. Thus Jeremiah is in exact accord with the evangelical teaching of Isaiah.

3. *For thus...*] Ewald, Keil, and others, think that Jeremiah's third prophecy ends with *v.* 2: far better, Umbreit sees in these two verses the application of the whole prophecy. And this is confirmed by the grammar: for the conjunction connects these verses inseparably with what precedes: and still more so does the sense. Jeremiah was Judah's prophet, and though this message was nominally addressed to Ephraim, yet really its lesson was for Judah. Israel is represented as repentant, and as being thereupon restored to its high office of evangelizing the Gentiles. The application to Judah was too direct and easy to be mistaken, and Jeremiah is content to press it upon the national conscience in a few curt, biting phrases, which take their edge from the clear proof previously given that Judah's sin was less excusable than Israel's.

to the men] The word is sing. **To each man** *of Judah*. They are summoned individually to repentance. In the next verse Jerusalem is changed into *the dwellers in Jerusalem*, in the pl.

Break up] Lit. **Fallow for you a fallow ground**, *i.e.* do not sow the seeds of repentance in unfit soil, but just as the husbandman prepares the ground, by clearing it of weeds, and exposing it to the sun and air, before entrusting to it the seed, so must you regard repentance as a serious and important matter, requiring forethought, and anxious labour. Hosea (x. 12) had already used the same metaphor, and Ezekiel (xviii. 31) gives the full meaning when he says, "Make you a new heart."

sow not among thorns] Cp. Matt. xiii. 7. One great object of an ancient fallow was to give the farmer time with his inferior implements to get the land clear of weeds. To sow, therefore, in unfallowed ground, was to sow on land full of thorns.

4. *Circumcise yourselves to the* LORD] Circumcision was the sign of a covenant between God and man, and its being *to the Lord* implies a real dedication of self to His service. See note on Deut. x. 16.

the foreskins...] The foreskin represented nature, such as it is in itself, unrenewed, unconsecrated to God, retaining all its inbred lusts and passions, called therefore by St Paul "the old man" and "the carnal mind" (Rom. vi. 6, viii. 7). All this is to be removed from our inner selves, that a new and spiritual nature may take its place.

lest my fury...] God is long-suffering, but unless this change take place, the time of judgment must at length come to all as it came to Jerusalem. It will come *like fire*, because fire is the symbol of utter destruction, and on that day of visitation everything which is not God's work in man (Phil. ii. 12, 13), being tried by the fire (1 Cor. iii. 13), will be consumed.

JEREMIAH'S FOURTH PROPHECY, OR GROUP OF PROPHECIES.

Chaps. iv. 5—vi. 30.

God's judgment upon the Unrepentant.

INTRODUCTION.—A group of prophecies now commences, extending to ch. x. 25, but broken at the beginning of ch. vii. by a new heading. The subject of them all is the same, namely, the approaching devastation of Judæa by a hostile army in punishment of its persistence in idolatry. As regards their date, Hitzig argues that, from the mention in ch. vii. 17, 18, of the worship of the Queen of Heaven as publicly practised in the streets of Jerusalem, it follows that they were written prior to the eighteenth year of Josiah, when every external sign of idolatry was carefully put away. That particular prophecy, however, was written, as we shall shew, in the first year of Jehoiakim, while as regards the rest they probably extended over a considerable period of time. In the roll written for Jehoiakim the prophecies were arranged not chronologically, but according to their subject, especially with reference to the main point, "the evil which God purposed against Jerusalem." In this group, which we may reasonably believe to have come down to us much as it stood in Jehoiakim's roll, we apparently have a selection from Jeremiah's earlier teaching, and to attempt to find a date for each portion is hopeless.

Moreover, this idea of dating everything is founded upon a mistaken view of the whole office of the prophet. His business was not so much to come forward upon great occasions with startling predictions, as to be daily a preacher of righteousness. And this group of prophecies gives us a general view of the nature of Jeremiah's efforts during that important period, when under Josiah a national reformation was still possible, and the exile

fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

5 Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.

6 Set up the standard toward Zion: ‖ retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the [c] north, and a great [†] destruction.

7 The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; *and* thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.

8 For this [d] gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us.

9 And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the LORD, *that* the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder.

10 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall

‖ Or, *strengthen.*
[c] chap. 1. 13, 14, 15. & 6. 1, 22.
[†] Heb. *breaking.*
[d] chap. 6. 26.

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might have been averted. And though in ch. vii. we have a prophecy spoken in the first year of Jehoiakim, when the probation of Judah was virtually over, and the prophet's teaching could do no more than preserve a remnant, in whom the nation should, in due time, once again revive; yet this does not break the sequence of thought. It was the solemn closing of the appeal to the conscience of the people, and a protest, while the new king was still young upon his throne, against that ruinous course upon which he so immediately entered.

5. *Declare ye in Judah...*] Rather, **Make proclamation** *in Judah, and in Jerusalem* **bid them hear,** *and say, Blow the trumpet* **throughout** *the land:* **cry aloud** *and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.* The prophecy begins with a loud alarm of war. A hostile army is already upon the borders, and everywhere instructions are being given to the people to flee for protection to the fortified cities. The verse well sets forth in its numerous commands the excitement and confusion of such a time. The A.V. with the LXX., Syr., Targ., and the Masora omits the conjunction *and* before *blow ye.* Its insertion in the written Hebrew text is probably a mere error of the scribe.

cry, gather together, and say] Literally, *cry, make full, and say, i.e.*, **cry aloud** *and say.* In ch. xii. 6 a similar phrase is translated in the marg., *they cried fully*, and this is the right sense of the Hebrew idiom.

6. *Set up the standard*] By the standard is meant a flag or signal, to which the people were to rally; by placing such signals on fit spots the safest route would be indicated to the fortified towns.

retire, stay not] Rather, **gather your goods together: linger not.** The verb is used in Exod. ix. 19 in exactly the same sense of removing property to a place of safety. See note there, and on Isai. x. 31.

for I will bring] Or, *for I* (emphatic, I Jehovah) **am bringing** at this very time. *Destruction*, literally *breaking*, a calamity which will crush the nation to pieces. For the *north* see ch. i. 14.

7. *The lion...the destroyer of the Gentiles*] Rather, **A** *lion...***a** *destroyer* **of nations.** It is simply a metaphor descriptive of the impending calamity. A lion is just rousing himself from his lair, but no common one. It is a destroyer, not of men, but of nations.

is on his way] Literally, *has broken up* his encampment. Jeremiah, as is not unfrequently the case, drops his metaphor at once, and uses a military term (see note on 2 K. xix. 8), strictly referring to the striking of tents in preparation for the march.

shall be laid waste] This verb occurs only in this place, but the rendering of the A.V. is approved by most commentators. *Without an inhabitant* marks the final stage of destruction, and was actually reached in the utter depopulation of Judæa consequent upon Gedaliah's murder.

8. *is not turned...*] If God's anger were appeased, there would then be the hope, that protected by their fortresses, they might wait till the tide of war had passed away. But as long as their sins are unrepented of, so long must their punishment continue.

10. *Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD!*] **Alas! my Lord Jehovah.** This verse has greatly troubled commentators, as being a murmur, an expression of disapproval on Jeremiah's part. Ewald boldly reads *and he said, i.e.* one said, for *then said I.* Umbreit thinks that Jeremiah spoke in the name of the people, and Roorda regards the words as irony against the false prophets. Really, Jeremiah had con-

have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul.

11 At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse,

12 *Even* a full wind from those *places* shall come unto me: now also will I give sentence against them.

13 Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots *shall be* as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

14 O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

15 For a voice declareth from

‖ Or, *a fuller wind than those.*
† Heb. *utter judgments.*
e Isai. 1. 16.
f chap. 8. 16.

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stantly to struggle against the misgivings of his own melancholy nature, but he never let them prevent him from doing his duty. See note on ch. i. 4 and Introduction, p. 318.

Ye shall have peace] These words are generally referred to the false prophets, who also spake in Jehovah's name, and whose prophecies He seemed to sanction by not interposing to confound them. They rather refer to real prophecies of future blessedness promised to the Jews. Jeremiah could not understand the twofold aspect of prophecy, sparkling at one time with bright promises of wide-spread empire and glory and power, and dark at another time with threatenings of national humiliation. To this day a Jew reading the prophecies of Isaiah and Obadiah, and rejecting their spiritual fulfilment in Christ, would equally feel as if God had deceived His people. So Jeremiah could not reconcile the doom he was now commanded to pronounce, either with his previous prophecy, or with what he read in the writings of his predecessors. Time only could solve the difficulty. Upon the struggles of the prophets to understand their own predictions see 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

unto the soul] The word translated soul, *nephesh*, is often used as equivalent to *life*. Thus in Gen. ix. 4 the Hebrew is literally, "But flesh in its soul, its blood." The sword then has reached the life, *i.e.* has inflicted a mortal wound. (See note on Gen. i. 20.)

11. *At that time*] The time when the destroying lion leaves its lair to go up to Jerusalem. It is worthy of notice, that though the revelation of the certainty of Judah's ruin wrings from Jeremiah a cry of despair, yet that it is but for a moment, and relieved by his ejaculation, he immediately returns to the delivery of God's message.

shall it be said] The verb is used impersonally, because it does not refer to any message from God by His prophets, but to the news of the invasion brought to Jerusalem by every fugitive.

A dry wind] Lit. **A clear wind.** Cp. Isai. xviii. 4. The Samûm is probably meant, a dry parching wind blowing from the Arabian desert, before which vegetation withers, and human life becomes intolerable. It comes from the east, and being accompanied by a cloudless sky is called the *clear wind*. The rainy winds in Palestine blow from the north and west. For the *high places*, see on ch. iii. 2.

toward] The Hebr. has only (*derech*), *a path, way*, without any government. Some therefore take it as the subject of the sentence, and translate *The path, i.e.* behaviour, *of the daughter of my people is the hot wind from the bleak hills of the desert*. The A. V. is better, which takes *derech* as an accusative, shewing the direction of the wind.

not to fan, nor to cleanse] The Syrian husbandmen make great use of the wind for separating the chaff from the corn: but when the Samûm blows labour becomes impossible. —It is not for use, but for destruction.

12. Even *a full wind from those* places] **A fuller wind than those** (marg.). The Hebr. literally is, *A wind full above those*, but there is much diversity of opinion as to the exact meaning of the pronoun *those*. The simplest explanation is to supply *winds*. A wind more full, more impetuous than those winds which serve for fanning and cleansing the corn.

shall come unto me] Rather, **for me**: shall come to perform my will.

now also will I...] God who has so long borne with the perversity of His people at length lets justice have its way. On the phrase "speaking judgments with any one" used here in the Hebr. see i. 16.

13. *Behold, he shall come up as clouds*] From the thought of God's justice, the prophet naturally returns to the person who was to execute it—"the destroyer of nations." His troops move on in large masses like dark threatening clouds (Joel ii. 2).

his horses are swifter than eagles] In Hab. i. 8 war-horses are compared to panthers, the lightness and rapidity of whose movements are often extolled by the ancients. Jeremiah however seems to have had in view 2 S. i. 23; so below, in *v.* 30, he refers to *v.* 24 of the same chapter.

Woe unto us! for we are spoiled] Either a dramatic representation of the lamentations of the Jews, or better, Jeremiah's own cry of grief. See *v.* 10.

14. *thy vain thoughts*] *Thy* **iniquitous**

Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim.

16 Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

17 As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the LORD.

18 [e] Thy way and thy doings have procured these *things* unto thee; this *is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

[e] Psal. 107. 17. Isai. 50. 1.

19 ¶ My [h] bowels, my bowels! I am pained at [†] my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I can-

[h] Isai. 22. 4. chap. 9. 1. [†] Heb. *the walls of my heart.*

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thoughts. *Aven*, the word used here, is especially applied to the sin of idolatry: thus Bethel is generally called Beth-aven by Hosea (iv. 15, v. 8, &c.), because instead of being the house of God, *El*, it was the house of an iniquity, *Aven*, the golden calf. So Amos, ch. v. 5, says, *Beth-el shall be for Aven, i.e.* for an iniquitous and idolatrous place.

15. *Dan*] The border-town of Palestine on the north (Deut. xxxiv. 1. See notes on Gen. xiv. 14; Judg. xviii. 7; 1 K. xii. 29).

mount Ephraim] The northern boundary of Judæa itself. The invading army presses on so rapidly, that scarcely have the news arrived of its appearance at Dan, before fresh messengers announce that it has traversed the whole length of Galilee, and is now defiling through the mountains of Samaria. The verbs also express the growing nearness of the danger. The first simply means *to announce, bring news:* while the second literally signifies *to make to be heard*, to publish, or proclaim so loudly that all must hear.

affliction] This is the same word, *aven*, as occurs in the previous verse, and apparently there is a play upon its double meaning: for from a root signifying worthlessness, it is used both for wickedness and for misery. Thus then the *iniquity* of Judah proves also to be her *affliction*, as being the cause of the devastation and ruin inflicted by the enemy.

16. *to the nations*] The probable translation of these much-contested words is, **Proclaim ye to the heathen**, *Behold!* **Cry aloud concerning** *Jerusalem, that watchers* **are on their way** *from a far country: and* **will** *give out their voice against the cities of Judah.* The word *behold* belongs to the first clause, the heathen being summoned, as St Jerome points out, to witness the chastisement of Jerusalem, that they may take warning thereby. By *watchers* are meant besiegers, who will surround the city with a line of sentinels.

17. *As keepers of a field*] In the time of our translators it may be doubted whether the term *field* was ever used of enclosed plots of ground. Such enclosures were called parks, while the field was the open country (Lev. xiv. 7, xvii. 5, &c.). In it not only was it necessary to watch the cattle (Luke ii. 8), but also the crops (Job xxvii. 18). Jeremiah therefore compares the tents of the besiegers on guard round Jerusalem to the booths erected by shepherds or husbandmen for the protection of their flocks or produce.

The verb *keep* is used in 2 S. xi. 16 of *blockading* a city, where the A. V. less exactly renders it *observed*. See notes on Judg. i. 23; 2 S. xi. 16.

rebellious...] Cp. Lam. i. 18, 20; Hosea xiv. 1.

18. *thy wickedness*] This word signifies both evil done and evil suffered by any one. The A. V. takes it in the first sense. This siege is thy wickedness, *i.e.* in its results; but better, this is thy wretchedness, this army and thy approaching ruin is thy misery, thy wretched lot.

because] Rather, **for**. To feel that one's misery is the result of one's own doings adds bitterness to the anguish, and makes it *reach*, penetrate to the heart. (Cp. ch. iv. 10.) In *mâr*, "it is bitter," there is an allusion to *mârâthâh*, "she hath rebelled," in *v.* 17.

19. *My bowels*] The Targ. and most commentators regard these cries of grief as Jeremiah's own: but the next verse compared with ch. x. 20 shews that they belong to the whole nation. The verse is best translated as a series of ejaculations, in which the people express their grief at the ravages committed by the enemy:

My bowels! My bowels! **I writhe in pain!**
The walls of my heart! *My heart* **moans for me!**
I cannot keep silence!
For *thou hast heard, O my soul,* **the trumpet's voice!**
The alarm of war!

For the verb *I writhe in pain*, see Note at end of Chapter.

the walls. Ewald and others incorrectly translate *the chambers*. The heart beating violently for fear seems to strike against enclosing walls.

moans. The word is applied to any low but continued sound, as of doves cooing, Ezek. vii. 16; the growling of dogs, Ps. lix. 6; and

not hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

20 Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, *and* my curtains in a moment.

21 How long shall I see the standard, *and* hear the sound of the trumpet?

22 For my people *is* foolish, they have not known me; they *are* sottish children, and they have none understanding; they *are* wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

23 I beheld the earth, and, lo, *it was* without form, and void; and the heavens, and they *had* no light.

24 I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.

25 I beheld, and, lo, *there was* no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.

26 I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful

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bears, Isai. lix. 11; the roaring of the waves, Jer. v. 22; and of floods, Isai. xvii. 12. Twice it is applied as here to the low moaning of persons in grief, Isai. xvi. 11; Jer. xlviii. 36.

thou hast heard] Most ancient versions, followed by Ewald, &c., read *My soul hath heard.* But the word used by Jeremiah is only remarkable as being the Aramaic instead of the Hebr. form, and needs no correction. The objection of modern critics that it is unnatural in trouble to address the soul is answered by Ps. xlii. 5.

20. *Destruction upon destruction*] Or, **breaking upon breaking** (*v.* 6). The news of one breaking, one violent calamity, follows close upon another.

my tents spoiled] Tents were the ordinary habitations of the Israelites. Not only did nomads like the Rechabites live in tents, but the mass of the population engaged in pastoral pursuits. See notes on 2 S. xviii. 17; 1 K. viii. 66, &c.

my curtains] The curtains of the tent, put here for the tents themselves (ch. x. 20, xlix. 29; Cant. i. 5).

21. *the standard*] See *v.* 6.

the sound...] The alarm caused by the invasion is most graphically described. The people are dispersed over the land quietly following their usual pursuits, when tidings come of the enemy's approach. The trained cavalry of the Assyrians, who are depicted in one of the plates in Layard's 'Monuments of Assyria' overriding a mountainous country like Judæa, spread rapidly on all sides. The only chance of escape is a hasty flight. A line of flags streams from the hills to mark the place of meeting, and the safest route, while the blasts of the trumpet quicken the steps of the wavering and reluctant. As they gather their cattle, or pile their most valued goods upon their carts, we seem to hear their involuntary ejaculations of pain, the moans and cries with which they quit their homes, or listen to the tidings brought in quick succession of some fresh disaster, or of the enemy's appearance in some unexpected place. Even the rapid transition from one metaphor to another adds to the force of the prophet's words.

22. *For*] The answer to the question in *v.* 21. This terror does not come without a cause, and will last until that cause—the folly of the people—is removed.

23. *I beheld*] In *vv.* 19—21, we heard the people's cry of terror; in *v.* 22 God declared the cause of their ruin to have been their folly: and now in four verses each beginning with *I beheld*, the prophet sees in vision the desolate condition of Judæa during the Babylonian captivity: after which in *vv.* 27, 28 he publishes God's solemn sentence, declaring Judah's doom, but with it also her restoration.

without form, and void] **Desolate and void**, see note on Gen. i. 2. The land has returned to a state of chaos: it is mere nothingness and emptiness, as before God's Spirit brooded upon it to bring it into order and beauty. See notes on Isai. xxiv. 10, xxxiv. 11.

and the heavens] **And upward to the heavens.** The imagery is that of the last day of judgment (Isai. xiii. 10; Joel ii. 10, iii. 15; and cp. Ps. xviii. 9, 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 12; Amos viii. 9). The great light-bearers are not to cease their shining so long as the earth endureth (Gen. ix. 16), but to Jeremiah's vision all was as though the day of the Lord had come, and earth returned to the state in which it was before the first creative word (see 2 Pet. iii. 10).

24. *moved lightly*] *Reeled to and fro.* The mountains, the most grand and majestic features of the earth, toss to and fro from the violence of the earthquake, probably the most awful of God's visitations.

25. *no man*] The utmost solitude prevails, and even the birds, the freest and most widely spread of living animals, have all departed.

26. *the fruitful place*] The Carmel, the

place *was* a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, *and* by his fierce anger.

27 For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; [i] yet will I not make a full end.

[i] chap. 5. 18.

28 For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it*, I have purposed *it*, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

29 The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city *shall be* forsaken, and not a man dwell therein.

30 And *when* thou *art* spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest

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rich vineland (ii. 7), where the population had been most dense, and the labours of the husbandman most richly rewarded, has become not *a wilderness* but **the wilderness**. The article added to the predicate, contrary to the usual rules of Hebrew grammar, shews that the comparison is with some special spot, like the inhospitable waste to the south-east of Judæa. See note on ch. ii. 31.

at the presence] Lit. *from the face of Jehovah, from the face of the heat of His nostril*, that is, because of, at the command of Jehovah, and because of His anger (cp. xxiii. 9, xxv. 37).

27. *For thus...*] Lest what precedes might seem only poetry, Jeremiah now solemnly speaks in God's name.

desolate] The word in Hebr. is a subs., **a waste**. It sums up the particulars of the four preceding verses.

a full end] This is one of the most striking points of prophecy, that however severe may be the judgment pronounced against Judah, there is always the reservation, that the ruin shall not be complete (iii. 14). The ten tribes were removed from their land, and have known no national restoration. Nineveh, Babylon, fall for ever (ch. li. 64); Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans pass absolutely away (Dan. ii. 35). Not so the Jews: of them God says, *A full destruction*, lit. a consummation, a final annihilation, *I will not make*. See for the original covenant with Israel, Lev. xxvi. 44; and for the prophets, Isai. vi. 13, x. 21, &c.; Jer. xxx. 11; Ezek. xx. 34; Amos ix. 8, &c.

28. *For this...*] Because of this doom about to fall upon Judah.

be black] A symbol of mourning. The heavens shall shroud themselves in dark clouds, in sympathy with the earth's misery.

I have purposed it] The LXX. are probably right in arranging this after *repent*, as it restores the parallelism;

For I have spoken, and will not repent,
I have purposed, and will not turn back from it.

29. *The whole city*] Rather, **Every city**, as below. The "whole city" would be Jerusalem, but the prophet here resumes his vision, interrupted at *v.* 27 by God's emphatic confirmation of its truth, and the sense required is that all the inhabitants of the towns are on their flight to Jerusalem for protection, or, hopeless of reaching it, seek refuge in the woods and rocks. There are, however, reasons for believing that the LXX. and Targum are right in reading here *the whole land*, כל־הארץ.

shall flee] Rather, **is fleeing**. It is the present participle. The flight has already begun.

the noise] Lit. *the voice*, the shouting.

the horsemen and bowmen] For the cavalry, see on iv. 13. These with bowmen formed the chief strength of the Assyrian armies. Nothing is more striking in Layard's 'Monuments of Nineveh,' than the huge bows carried by the warriors. (See especially Sennacherib's siege of Lachish, Series II. Pl. 21.)

they shall go] **They have gone.**

thickets] There is no real ground for rejecting this translation, though usually the word *'ábh* means *a cloud*. Still it is not the ordinary name for a thicket, but a poetic term signifying literally a *covert*. In Syriac and Arabic it is constantly used of woods, and Jeremiah may have used it from his fondness for Aramaic expressions.

rocks] This word, which occurs also in Job xxx. 6, is likewise remarkable as being a Syriasm. It is the name *Cephas* given to Simon Peter in the New Testament. The Septuagint has given only a loose paraphrase of the verse, owing probably to the translators not being well acquainted with the vernacular dialects of Palestine.

30. *And* when...] Translate, **And thou, O plundered one, what effectest thou, that** *thou clothest thyself with* **scarlet, that** *thou deckest* **thyself** *with ornaments of gold*, **that thou enlargest thine eyes with antimony?** *In vain* **dost thou beautify thyself;** *thy lovers* **despise** *thee, they* **seek** *thy life*. Jerusalem is represented as a woman who puts on her best attire to gain favour in the eyes of her lovers, but in vain. For the oriental

thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy †face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; *thy* lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

† Heb. *eyes.*

31 For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, *and* the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, *that* bewaileth herself, *that* spreadeth her hands, *saying*, Woe *is* me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

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custom of *enlarging*, lit. *separating* the eyes with antimony, see note on 2 K. ix. 30, and Lane, 'Manners of the Egyptians,' I. 51.

31. *a woman in travail*] Jeremiah does not use the ordinary word, but the verb rendered *writhe with pain*, in *v.* 19.

her first child] The parallelism as usual repeats the idea in an intenser form; thus it has *anguish* instead of a *voice*, *i.e.* a cry, and for a *woman-in-travail*, it gives *one that bringeth forth her first-born*, and whose pain is heightened by terror. (On the metaphor, see vi. 24, xlix. 24.)

the daughter of Zion] The usual phrase for the inhabitants of Zion (see note on Ps. ix. 14).

bewaileth herself] Or, **gasps**; lit. *that breathes fast, that pants for breath.*

spreadeth her hands] The Hebr. says, **the palms of her hands**, the "supinas manus" of Horace, Od. iii. 23. 1.

because of murderers] The LXX., Syr., Vulg., &c., take the participle as passive, and render *My soul faints because of the slain.* The Targ. however agrees with the Masoretic punctuation—for the sense depends not upon the consonants, but upon the vowels—in making it active, and it must then be translated, **My soul faints to the murderers**, *i.e.* sinks exhausted before them, and can make no further effort to escape. The whole should be translated:

For a cry have I heard as of one writhing in pain:
Anguish as of one that bringeth forth her first-born:
The cry of the daughter of Zion.
She gasps for breath: she stretches out her palms:
Woe is me! for my soul faints before the murderers.

NOTE on CHAP. IV. 19.

The word אוֹחוּלָה is composed of אָחוּלָה, the C'tib, and אוֹחִילָה, the Kri, the form אוֹחוּלָה, given for the C'tib in most Hebrew Bibles, being a monstrosity, which the editors have invented from not noticing that the inserted ו represents the vowel of the Kri.

The word is formed from חוּל, *to writhe in pain*, with the intensive ה֫ added.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The judgments of God upon the Jews, for their perverseness, 7 for their adultery, 10 for their impiety, 19 for their contempt of God, 25 and for their great corruption in the civil state, 30 and ecclesiastical.*

RUN ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be *any* that executeth

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CHAP. V. 1. *Run ye to and fro*] The prophet, in this and the next eight verses, speaking at one time in his own name, and at another in the name of Jehovah, justifies the severity of God's judgments upon Jerusalem. Its capture, and the destruction of its inhabitants, were owing to their utter immorality. From the description of the universal corruption of the people of Jerusalem given in this chapter, many have argued that the date of the prophecy must be subsequent to the times of Josiah, when such was the disorganized state of society, that the righteous were obliged to withdraw from public life (D. Kimchi), or even remain shut up in their houses (J. Kimchi). Its true sense, however, rather is that Josiah's reforms were frustrated by the immorality prevalent among all classes: which though checked for a time, yet was too deeply ingrained to be really eradicated by all that good king could do. The prophet sees evil triumphing, but we must not take his words so literally as to conclude that there were no good men then in Jerusalem. On the contrary, there were many, and God removed them "for their good" to Babylon before the final overthrow of the city that in them the nation might once again revive (cp. iv. 27, xxiv. 5).

judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

2 And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.

3 O LORD, *are* not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast [a] stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, *but* they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

4 Therefore I said, Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, *nor* the judgment of their God.

5 I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the LORD, *and* the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, *and* burst the bonds.

6 Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, *and* a wolf of the [1] evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, *and* their backslidings [†] are increased.

7 ¶ How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by *them that are* no gods: when I had fed them to the full,

[a] Isai. 9. 13. chap. 2. 30.

[1] Or, *deserts.*

[†] Heb. *are strong.*

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the broad places] The markets, open spaces at the entering in of the gates, and other places of concourse.

a man] The Hebr. word means *any one.*

that executeth] *That* **practiseth.** There has been a gradual change of language since the A. V. was made, and the word *execute*, a favourite term with the translators, is seldom used now except of public officers. In the A. V. it often means nothing more than *doing*, the lit. rendering of the Hebr. word here.

truth] The Hebr. word does not mean *truth* in words, or in matters of belief or opinion, but in *actions;* it would be better translated **uprightness, probity.**

2. *surely*] Though they take the most binding form of oath, not by the name of a false god (*v.* 7), nor such as the Rabbins taught might be evaded (Matt. xxiii. 16, 18), but by the self-existence of Jehovah, nevertheless they do so only as a means of more easily deceiving others.

3. *upon the truth*] This phrase in the Hebr. is in contrast with the word rendered *falsely* in *v.* 2, lit. they swear *for falseness*, while God looks for *truth* (*emunah*), truth in actions, probity (see *v.* 1). The natural antithesis to *falseness*, would be *truth in words* (*emeth*), but both the LXX. and Vulg. call attention to the larger meaning of the noun employed by rendering it *faith* (πίστιν, fidem); God looks to the *faith*, the upright purpose of the heart, and without it the nominal fealty of an oath is an abomination. The translation of Hitzig, *Are not thine eyes true?* is untenable.

4. *Therefore*] This is too strong a rendering for the simple conjunction *and.* Better, **I said however,** *i.e.* in myself, I thought within myself (see iii. 7).

they are foolish] Or, **they act foolishly** (see Num. xii. 11), not having that knowledge which would enable them to guide their ways with discretion.

5. *they have known...*] These are men of education, raised by their wealth above daily wants; and who therefore read the Scriptures, and learn from them the nature of God's judgments.

but these] Lit. **surely they.** It is the same word as in the corresponding clause of *v.* 4, *surely they are poor.* In both places *they* is more correct than *these.*

the yoke] The Mosaic law (Targ.).

and *burst...*] **They have torn off,** torn themselves loose from.

the bonds] These are the fastenings by which the yoke was securely fixed upon the necks of the oxen. See note on Ps. *ii.* 3.

6. *a lion out of the forest*] See iv. 7.

a wolf of the evenings] **Deserts** (marg.), and so Rashi. From its habit of skulking about in the twilight the wolf is often called the *evening wolf* (Hab. i. 8; Zeph. iii. 3), but the word of which the plural is used here, though similar in sound, means a sandy desert (ch. ii. 6).

a leopard] **A panther.** The sly habits of this animal lying in wait till something passes by, the suddenness of its spring, and the ferocity with which it tears its prey to pieces, are noticed both here and in Hos. xiii. 7; for its fleetness, see Hab. i. 8.

7. *How...for this?*] Rather, **Why,** for what reason **should** *I pardon thee?* See Note A at end of Chapter.

when I had fed them to the full] Or, *though I bound them to me by oath, yet they committed adultery.* See Note B at end of Chapter.

they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

[b] Ezek. 22. 11. 8 [b] They were *as* fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.

9 Shall I not visit for these *things?* saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 ¶ Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they *are* not the LORD's.

11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

[c] Isai. 28. 15. 12 They have belied the LORD, and said, [c] *It is* not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine:

13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word *is* not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, [d] behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. [d] chap. 1. 9.

15 Lo, I will bring a [e] nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it *is* a mighty nation, it *is* an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. [e] Deut. 28. 49. chap. 1. 15. & 6. 22.

16 Their quiver *is* as an open sepulchre, they *are* all mighty men.

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the harlots' houses] **The harlot's house**, *i.e.* the temple of an idol, but, as the next verse shews, the prophet had also in view the unchastity which accompanied most forms of nature-worship.

8. *fed horses*] Right. See Note A at end of Chapter.

in the morning] Really, **they rove about.** This is the simplest and most grammatical rendering of a very difficult word. See Note B at end of Chapter.

10. *her walls*] This word, *shârôth*, occurs only here, and in Ezek. xxvii. 25, where the versions give no settled meaning, and the A. V. renders "did sing of thee." Here, it takes it as an equivalent to *shurôth*, *walls*, Job xxiv. 11, and Gesenius abides by this rendering. The preposition however used with the verb, lit. *into*, makes it possible that not the city walls, but those of a vineyard are meant. Judæa is God's vineyard (Isai. v. 1—7), elsewhere she is herself the vine, Jer. vi. 9; and God permits the enemy to enter the vineyard, to destroy her.

her battlements] **Her tendrils.** The idea does not arise from that of walls, but from the injunction not to make a complete destruction. The tendrils and branches of Judah's vine are given up to ruin, but not the stock. See note on Isai. vi. 13, and on ch. iv. 27.

12. It is *not he*] *i.e.* who speaks by the prophets. What the Jews denied was, that the troubles which were coming upon their land were in any especial sense God's doing. The prophets asserted the contrary.

13. *become wind*] It is still the language of the scoffing Jews.

word] Rather, **speaker.** It is not a noun, but a verb with the article instead of the possessive pronoun (see Josh. x. 24; Judg. xiii. 8, &c.), so that lit. it means, *And he who speaketh is not in them, i.e.* there is no one who speaketh in them; what the prophets say has no higher authority than themselves.

thus...] Rather, **so be it done unto them,** *i.e.* may the evil which the prophets threaten fall upon their own head.

14. *my words*] They are still God's words though in Jeremiah's mouth. There is therefore in the prophet one that speaketh. See also ch. i. 9.

15. *O house of Israel*] Israel is not put here for the ten tribes, but for the whole house of Jacob, of which Judah was now the representative. Josiah even exercised a sort of sovereignty over the remnant of the Israelites (2 K. xxiii.).

a mighty nation] The word rendered *mighty* (*eythan*), rather means *permanent, enduring* (see note on Prov. xiii. 15), and is thus the usual epithet of the rocks, Num. xxiv. 21; Micah vi. 2; and of ever-flowing streams, Deut. xxi. 4, where see Note; Ps. lxxiv. 15. So too the Phœnicians applied it to their highest deity, Bel-itan, the primæval and everlasting Baal (Movers, 'Phœn.' I. 254 sqq.). It means therefore a nation, whose empire is firm as a rock, and ever rolling onwards like a mighty river. The next epithet *ancient* refers simply to time, and not as the present to long-enduring greatness.

whose language thou knowest not] This would render them more pitiless, as they would not understand their cries for mercy.

16. *Their quiver*] See note on ch. iv. 29,

17 And they shall eat up thine
[f] Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 33. harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

18 Nevertheless in those days, saith
[g] chap. 4. 27. the LORD, I [g] will not make a full end with you.

19 ¶ And it shall come to pass,
[h] chap. 13. 22. & 16. 10. when ye shall say, [h] Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these *things* unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land *that is* not yours.

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

21 Hear now this, O [i] foolish peo-
[i] Isai. 6. 9 Matt. 13. 14. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. [†] Heb. *heart.* ple, and without [†] understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:

22 Fear ye not me? saith the
[k] Job 38. 10, 11. Psal. 104. 9. LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the [k] bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss

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and Layard, 'Mon. of Nin.,' Series II. Plates 39, 45, 46, 47, &c.

17. which *thy sons*...] The A.V. alone translates in this way, following Abravanel. The rendering given by the other versions is far more natural and correct;

> **It shall eat** *thine harvest and thy bread:*
> **They shall eat** *thy sons and thy daughters:*
> **It shall eat thy sheep and thy cattle:**
> **It shall eat** *thy vines and thy fig-trees.*

The Hebrew idiom is very tolerant of changes of number, and there is no difficulty in *they shall eat* being placed between verbs in the singular.

they shall impoverish...] Or, **It shall batter thy** *fortified cities, wherein thou* **trustest, with weapons of war.** The verb rendered "impoverish," occurs in only one other place of Scripture (Mal. i. 4), but the root is well known, and means *to pound, beat small.* Thus the Vulg. renders it *conteret, shall break small,* the LXX. ἀλοήσουσι *shall thresh as corn on the floor,* and the Targum *shall break down.* This sense suits both places, and probably here it refers to an instrument like a battering-ram, with which the Assyrians beat down the walls of their enemies. This instrument may be found depicted in Layard, 'Mon. of Nin.,' Series I. Pl. 19, and elsewhere. In ch. xxxiii. 4; Ezek. xxvi. 9 *chereb*, which properly signifies a *sword*, is used, as here, in a more general sense for the warlike implements employed in battering down towers.

19. *Like as*...] This verse completes the section, which began at *v.* 14, by giving the reason why God so chastises His people. As they in a land specially consecrated to Jehovah had served *strange, i.e.* foreign gods (a stronger epithet than the *other* gods of ch. i. 16), so shall they as exiles in a land belonging to others be the slaves of strangers. Neumann here points out that Jeremiah's prophecy that the exiles shall dwell in a fixed abode, is irreconcileable with the supposition that the nation described in *v.* 15 could be the Scythians, who were a horde of roving plunderers, themselves in search of a settlement.

20—31. *Declare this*...] The more clearly to set before the people their guilt, Jeremiah now proclaims to Israel and Judah alike that the Jehovah, whom they so carefully thrust aside, is the God (1) of creation, *v.* 22, and (2) of providence, *v.* 24. Yet against Him they sin, not merely by apostasy, but by a general immorality extending to all classes, *vv.* 25—28. It is in this immorality that their idolatry has its root. In all ages the strength of the false teacher is *My people, i.e.* those who ought to be My people, *love to have it so, v.* 31.

22. *sand* for *the bound of the sea*] Jeremiah's first proof of the existence of a God is drawn from His works in creation. The sea is the very symbol of restless and indomitable energy, chafing against all resistance, and dashing to pieces the works whereby man endeavours to restrain its fury. Yet God has imposed upon it laws which it must obey, and keeps it in its appointed place, not by barriers of iron but by a belt of sand. But modern science has shewn that the resisting power of sand is enormous. By the mechanical laws which govern it the shock of a blow is distributed laterally, and produces little effect. An egg buried a few inches deep in the sand would not be broken by heavy blows falling upon the surface. And so a wave which would shatter rocks falls powerless upon sand.

toss themselves] Throw themselves upon their sandy barriers in a mass, strike it again and again with their solid weight.

themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

24 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the [l] former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

25 ¶ Your iniquities have turned away these *things*, and your sins have withholden good *things* from you.

26 For among my people are found wicked *men*: [m] they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

27 As a [m] cage is full of birds,

[l] Deut. 11. 14.

[m] Or, *they pry as fowlers lie in wait.*

[m] Or, *coop.*

can they not prevail] This is the opposite of *thou couldest* in ch. iii. 5, the verb in both cases being the same. The sea, the mightiest of God's works, cannot prevail, cannot break His laws, because God has not endowed it with free-will. Man, physically impotent, can prevail, because, being made in God's image, he is free.

23. *a revolting...heart*] The heart, or will of the Jews was first *revolting*, lit. a will that *drew back* from God, because it disliked His service; and secondly it was *rebellious*, a will that actively resisted Him. The two adjectives are also found united in Deut. xxi. 18, 20. The tendency of modern use has been to obliterate the proper meaning of the word *revolt*.

they are revolted] *i.e.* they have withdrawn and are gone. The sea abides in its appointed place: man departs from it to wander in paths of his own choosing.

24. *Neither say they in their heart*] Jeremiah's second appeal is to God's care for man as shewn in providence. As this proof addresses itself chiefly to the thoughtful he says *in their heart*. By the intelligent study of God's dealings men perceive that they are not merely acts of power, but also of love.

Let us now fear] *i.e.* worship God, adopt His service.

that giveth rain] No appeal in proof of God's goodness is more frequently made in Scripture than to the regularity of the seasons (Acts xiv. 17), and especially to the complicated machinery by which the earth is supplied with water (Ps. cxlviii. 8). The vast reservoir of the ocean provided for the supply of vapour: the laws which cause these vapours to rise and float in the air: the winds which waft them to the land: the attraction there exercised upon them by trees, mountains, and the like: the currents of air moving in different directions, which, by their differences of temperature, cause the vapour to condense and be deposited in drops: the laws of congelation which store up part of the winter excess in the shape of snow and ice upon the mountains for summer use: the diversified strata of the earth, which store up another portion, causing it in some places to break forth in springs, in others keeping it out of the reach of evaporation, but available for man's use by the digging of wells: all these and the like arrangements shew such a thoughtful care for the supply of one of the first necessaries of human life, that those capable of understanding them ought to say in their hearts, "Let us fear and serve the Lord." There is, however, a difficulty in the text from Jeremiah seeming to speak of three kinds of rain (*geshem, and yôreh, and malkôsh*), whereas, as is well known, there are only two rainy seasons in Palestine. For this reason the Masorites supported by the Targ. and ancient versions omit the first *and*. More correctly, the A.V. takes the two *ands* as correlatives—*rain, both yôreh and malkôsh*.

the appointed weeks] Lit. **He guardeth**, maintaineth, **for us the weeks** which are **the statutes** or settled laws *of the harvest*. These were the seven weeks from the Passover to Pentecost, and were as important for the ingathering of the crops as the rainy seasons for their nourishment. The barley harvest began soon after the Passover, but the wheat requiring a longer time for its growth was not ripe till Pentecost, when the offering of the new sheaves formed one of the most significant ceremonies of the festival (Exod. xxxiv. 22).

25. *have turned away*] Lit. *have made to turn aside.*

have withholden] Have hindered, obstructed, prevented the good from reaching you. Both words affirm the same truth: it was not that the rains did not fall, or that the harvest weeks were less bright; the good was there, but the wickedness of the community blocked up the channels, through which it should have reached the people. There were a few rich men, but the lawlessness and injustice of the times kept the mass of the people in poverty.

26. *they lay wait...*] Rather, **he spieth about like the crouching down of fowlers; they have set the fatal snare; *they catch* men.** The first verb is in the singular, because it refers to the intrigues of crafty men, who singly and in silence plot the ruin of others. It means to spy about like a person watching for game. The word for

so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

28 They are waxen [m] fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the [n] cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

29 Shall I not visit for these *things?* saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

30 ¶ [‖] A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land;

31 The prophets prophesy [o] falsely, and the priests [‖] bear rule by their means; and my people love *to have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

[m] Deut. 32. 15.
[n] Isai. 1. 23. Zech. 7. 10.
[‖] Or, *Astonishment and filthiness.*
[o] chap. 14. 14. & 23. 25, 26. Ezek. 13. 6.
[‖] Or, *take into their hands.*

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trap literally signifies the *destroyer*, and probably was a gin, which strangled the birds caught in it.

27. *cage*] The word, *chelub*, is used in Amos viii. 1 for a fruit basket, and probably signifies anything made of wicker-work, and so here the large cage in which the fowler places the birds he has caught.

deceit] The wealth gained by deceit and fraud.

28. *They are waxen fat*] Fatness is admired in the East as a sign of wealth (Deut. xxxii. 15; Ps. xcii. 14; Prov. xxviii. 25. See note ib. xi. 25).

they shine] This word is used of the sleekness of the skin, soft and smooth as ivory.

they overpass the deeds of the wicked] Rather, *they overpass* **in deeds of wickedness**, go to excess in wickedness. Literally, the Hebrew is *They have overpassed words of wickedness, i.e.* as some explain it, they go to excess in wicked talk (Luke vi. 45); or as others, their doings exceed everything hitherto said of wickedness. Neither of these, however, is in accordance with the Hebrew idiom.

yet they prosper] Rather, **that they may prosper**, that the orphans may enjoy their rights.

29. *such a nation*] Cp. *v.* 9.

30. *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed*] Rather, **A terrible** *and horrible thing* **has happened** *in the land.* The word rendered *terrible* is really a noun meaning *desolation* (Ps. lxxiii. 19, and note on Isai. v. 9), and signifies here not something to wonder at, but that which appals and stupefies.

31. *bear rule by their means*] Rather, *The priests* **rule at their hands**, *i.e.* govern according to their false prophecies, govern according to their guidance and directions. The words are, however, difficult; and the LXX., Vulg., &c. translate, *The priests applaud with their hands;* but the Syr. *The priests held their hands*, i.e. strengthened and supported the false prophets.

my people love to have it *so*] It is a criterion of false teaching that it lightens the yoke of God's law, removes His fear from the conscience, and leaves man to his own nature: and with this, man is only too ready to be content.

NOTES on CHAP. V. 7, 8, 18.

NOTE A on *v.* 7.

The C'tib has אסלוח, for which the Kri substitutes the correct grammatical form אסלח. But the question is, How did this irregular form arise; and what does it signify? Neumann regards it as an intensive, *How can I at all pardon thee?* More probably Hitzig suggests that the right reading is the infin. לסלוח, as in MSS. ל and א are scarcely distinguishable. In this case the translation would be *How is it possible to pardon thee? How could one pardon thee?* (Ewald, 'Gr.' § 544.)

NOTE B on *v.* 7.

Most versions and more than 30 of De Rossi's MSS. read with the Kri and the A. V. וְאַשְׂבִּעַ *and I fed them to the full:* but the word which actually stands in the written text is וְאַשְׁבֵּעַ *and I made them swear*, nor is this sense inappropriate:

"Thy sons have forsaken me, and sworn by those that are no gods;
And I made them swear [bound them to me by the marriage covenant];
Yet they committed adultery."

And so the last two commentators Keil and Nägelsbach.

In estimating the value of Hebr. MSS., it must be borne in mind that there is always a tendency to substitute the Kri for the C'tib, not merely because it was regarded as an authoritative correction, but also as being suggested by the memory, the Kri being always read in the synagogues. In this case the Kri also obtained the more favourable acceptance because it is in agreement with other passages of Scripture (Deut. xxxii. 15; Neh. ix. 25; Prov. xxx. 9; Hosea xiii. 6, &c.). But the old rule holds good, *difficilius adeoque genuinum.*

NOTE A on *v.* 8.

The general sense of this metaphor is as plain, as the translation is difficult. The A. V. is however right in abiding by the text (מוזנים Hoph. part. of זון *to feed*), though it stands alone in so doing. The ancient versions generally translate *lustful*, and to obtain this meaning the Masorites changed the text into מיוזנים (Puh. part. of יזן = אזן). This change however is not necessary; for even without it the rendering of the versions can be easily accounted for, by supposing that they connected מוזנים with the preceding word זונה *harlot*. The root is the same, but it is uncertain whether its primary meaning be *to adorn*, whence *a harlot* = one who adorns herself (Prov. vii. 10), or *to feed*, whence in Josh. ii. 1 Rahab is often described as having been *a hostess*, one whose business was to feed travellers. (See however note there.)

NOTE B on *v.* 8.

The translation of the A. V. involves an impossible syncope (מַשְׁכִּים = מַשְׁכִּימִים). Other interpretations are (1) *horses from Meshech* (מֶשֶׁךְ), the land of good horses. Oppianus mentions Μάζηκας as a famous breed, and Togarmah, cousin of Meshech, trades in horses at Tyre (Ezek. xxvii. 14). (2) *stallions* (from אֶשֶׁךְ Lev. xxi. 20), Syr. ܐܶܡܟܳܐ. (3) *carriage horses* (Hitzig). (4) *lustful* (Ewald, but he reads מְשִׁכִים = מְשִׁקִים), The horse (Ezek. xxiii. 20), and especially the neighing stallion (Ecclus. xxiii. 6, Virg. 'Georg.' III. 250), is a common emblem of lust. The translation **they rove about** takes the verb as a part. regularly formed from שָׁכָה.

18. The Syr. LXX. and Vulg. render *I will not make you* to be *utter ruin*, *i.e.* they read אֶתְכֶם; but the Targum, which renders *with you*, עִמְּכוֹן, supports the punctuation of the Masorites and the A. V. אִתְּכֶם.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The enemies sent against Judah* 4 *encourage themselves.* 6 *God setteth them on work because of their sins.* 9 *The prophet lamenteth the judgments of God because of their sins.* 18 *He proclaimeth God's wrath.* 26 *He calleth the people to mourn for the judgment on their sins.*

O YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

CHAP. VI. Jeremiah now proceeds to unveil the judgment impending upon Jerusalem, and his description of it is divided into five parts, each beginning with the words "Thus saith Jehovah." These parts are (1) The arrival of the invading army (1—5); (2) The siege of Jerusalem (6—8); (3) Her capture (9—15); (4) The justification of her overthrow in the stubborn persistence of the nation in sin (16—21); and, lastly, The consequent severity of God's sentence (22—30).

1. *Benjamin*] Jeremiah addresses the men of Benjamin, either as being his own tribesmen, Anathoth being one of their towns; or as a name appropriate to the people of Jerusalem, which also was situate in the tribe of Benjamin, the valley of Hinnom being the boundary towards Judah.

gather yourselves to flee] Already we have seen that the true meaning of this verb is to gather one's goods together in order to remove them to a place of safety. In ch. iv. 6 it was the country people who were to load their wagons with their household stuff, and seek refuge in the city: here the people of Jerusalem are warned that their fortifications will not avail for their protection, and that the sole remaining place of refuge is the vast desert to the south of Judæa.

blow the trumpet in Tekoa] The name of Tekoa is almost identical with the verb *to blow*: but it was not chosen merely for the alliteration, but because it was the last town in Judæa, upon the very border of the desert, where the fugitives would halt, till the signals warned them of the enemy's approach. It was but a small place, and its ruins cover scarcely five acres of ground. They lie about eleven miles south of Jerusalem (Robinson, II. 182).

a sign of fire] Rather, **a signal**. The idea that the word had anything to do with fire is taken from Judg. xx. 38, 40, where it is used of the column of smoke, rising from the burning town, which was to be the signal for the Israelites to turn upon their pursuers. But the simple meaning of the word is *something lifted up*. What the signal here was we have no means of knowing.

Beth-haccerem] The Vineyard-House, was situated half-way between Jerusalem and Tekoa (Neh. iii. 14). Jerome, who was personally acquainted with the topography of Palestine, says, "Everyone knows that Jerusalem is situated in the tribe of Benjamin. As for

2 I have likened the daughter of Zion to a ‖comely and delicate *woman*.

‖ Or, *dwelling at home.*

3 The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch *their* tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

4 Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

5 Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

6 ¶ For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and ‖cast a mount against Jerusalem: this

‖ Or, *pour out the engine of shot.*

Tekoa, we see every day with our own eyes that it is a little town upon a hill about twelve (Roman) miles from Jerusalem. Between these is another village, called in the Hebrew and Syriac tongues Bethacharma, which also is placed upon a hill."

evil appeareth] The original is much more forcible, *evil* **is bending over** *from the north.* It is the word used of the mother of Sisera leaning out of the window, straining herself to the utmost to catch the first glimpse of her son's return (Judg. v. 28). So Pisgah bends over towards Jeshimon (Num. xxi. 20). So righteousness bends down from heaven (Ps. lxxxv. 11. See also Cant. vi. 10). So evil is bending forward in eagerness to seize its prey.

2. *I have likened*] This is the most tenable rendering, though most modern commentators take the verb in the same sense as that in which it is used in Hos. iv. 5, *I have reduced to silence, i.e.* destroyed, the daughter of Zion.

to a comely and delicate woman] The whole verse is difficult, but should probably be translated *to a pasturage, yea a luxuriant* pasturage, *have I likened the daughter of Zion.* See Note at end of Chapter. The next verse follows upon this naturally.

3. *The shepherds...*] Rather,

To it shall come *shepherds with their flocks:*
They have pitched upon it *their tents round about:*
They have pastured each his hand, *i.e. side.*

The pasture is so abundant that each feeds his flock, *i.e.* plunders Jerusalem, at the *side* of his own tent, in which sense the word *hand* is often used in Hebrew (1 S. iv. 18; 2 S. xiv. 30, &c.).

4. *Prepare ye war*] An inadequate rendering. The Hebr. is **Sanctify ye war against her.** War in ancient times was never undertaken without religious solemnities (see note on Deut. xx. 2). For some of these, cp. Ezek. xxi. 21—23.

at noon] The midday heat is so great in the east as to be usually passed under shelter (2 S. iv. 5; Cant. i. 7). The morning-march of an army was made fasting, and was usually over by eight or nine. The troops then prepared breakfast, and rested till noon was over. But so great is the impatience of the Chaldeans for the assault that they cry, *Up! and we will make the assault at noon!*

Woe unto us!] Or,

Alas for us! *for the day* **has turned!**
For the evening-shadows are lengthening!

5. **Up! and we will make the assault** *by night!*
And destroy *her palaces.*

The generals, more prudent than the troops, delay the assault till the next morning, the usual time for such an enterprize (Hamâsa, I. 189, ed. Rückert). The soldiers consider themselves aggrieved at this, and clamour for a night attack.

6. *Hew ye down trees*] Rather, **her trees.** The trees were to be cut down for the purpose simply of clearing the approaches, and Assyrian warriors so occupied may be seen in Layard, 'Mon. of Nin.' Series I. Pl. 73, 76, but they never seem to have built with them a wall of circumvallation, which was the first and most essential operation in a Greek or Roman siege. No traces of such a palisade are discernible in the Assyrian monuments, but they seem to have so pitched their camp as to enclose as much as they could of the town, and to have strengthened their lines with a series of detached forts. (On this custom of oriental warfare, see Job xix. 12, where also the raised road is mentioned; Ps. xxxiv. 7; Isai. xxix. 3; Jer. l. 29; for the Roman custom, Luke xix. 43. Lines of forts are mentioned in Jer. lii. 4; Ezek. xvii. 17; and single forts, ib. iv. 2, xxvi. 8.)

cast a mount] Lit. *pour*, from the emptying of the earth out of the baskets, in which it was carried to the required spot upon the backs of labourers. Such operations may be seen in Layard, Series II. Pl. 14, and soldiers assaulting by means of the mount at the siege of Lachish, ib. 21. See also Bonomi, 'Nin. and its Pal.' 275. *Mound* is quite right. It is derived from mons, mont-is, a mountain, for which it is commonly used in old English, but gradually it came to signify 'an artificial hill. *Mound* is a vulgarism which has gradually usurped the place of the true word. As soon as the mount reached the top of the

is the city to be visited; she *is* wholly oppression in the midst of her.

[a] Isai. 57. 20.

7 [a] As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually *is* grief and wounds.

8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul [†] depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

† Heb. *be loosed*, or, *disjointed*.

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall throughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.

10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their [b] ear *is* uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

[b] chap. 7. 26.

11 Therefore I am full of the fury

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city walls the assault was made (see 2 S. xx. 15; Isai. xxxvii. 33; Jer. xxxii. 24, xxxiii. 4; Ezek. xvii. 17; Herod. I. 162).

wholly] The Masoretic punctuation, supported by the ancient versions, is to be retained;

She *is the city* **that is visited:**
Wholly oppression **is** *in the midst of her!*

Less correctly, Venema, Henderson, &c. connect the word *wholly* with the preceding clause, *she is the city to be altogether visited:* but this leaves the last clause very weak; for what city is there which has no oppression in it? (Hitzig.) The Hebr. idiom, as is well known, describes that as done which ought to be done. *She is visited, i.e.* punished, means therefore that she is ripe for punishment.

7. *As a fountain casteth out*] Better, **As a cistern** *cooleth.* See Note at end of Chapter.

before me...] **Before my face continually there is disease and wounding.** Disease the result of poverty and want: wounding, the commission of deeds of actual violence.

8. *Be thou instructed*] The Hebr. is much stronger, **Be thou chastised:** learn the lesson which chastisement is intended to teach thee. See Ps. ii. 10, and Prov. xxix. 19, where it is rendered correctly.

lest my soul] Lest I myself (*v.* 9)—not *depart from thee*, God does not willingly leave His people, but—**be torn from thee.**

9. *They shall throughly glean the remnant*] Each word indicates the completeness of Judah's ruin. But a remnant remains on Israel's vine (iv. 27), and it must be gleaned again and again, that only one or two may escape destruction. Ezekiel (ch. v. 1—4) describes the same truth in his own forcible way.

turn back thine hand] Addressed perhaps to Nebuchadnezzar as God's servant (xxv. 9). He is required to go over the vine once again, that no grapes may escape except as by a miracle.

into the baskets] Better, *upon the tendrils.* The gleaner is to turn back his hand, and carefully go over the tendrils, that no grape may remain undiscovered. See Note at end of Chapter. While the Jews carried captive to Babylon escaped, misery gleaned the rest again and again. Even of those who took refuge in Egypt, "no traces can be found in history. The Jews in that country were the descendants of the colony which Ptolemy I. led there in B.C. 312, after having made himself master of Jerusalem" (Nicolas, 'Doctr. Relig. des Juifs,' p. 109). This statement, though exaggerated, is so far true that the Jews in Egypt were chiefly the descendants of later colonists.

10. *To whom shall I speak, and give warning*] Rather, **testify**, a much stronger word.

their ear is *uncircumcised*] The ear is thus spoken of only in this place, and Acts vii. 51, but the metaphor is elsewhere used of the lips, and constantly of the heart.

reproach] *i.e.* that which they treat with contumely. Destitute of that spiritual insight, which would enable them to understand the Word of God (1 Cor. ii. 14), they make it the object of their ridicule.

11. *I am full...*] The whole verse should be translated, **But I am filled with** *the fury of Jehovah: I am weary with holding* **it** *in.* **Pour it out** *upon the children* **in the street, and upon the company of youths** *together;* **for both man and** *wife shall be taken;* **the elder and he whose days are full.** God's anger at the wickedness of the people had been, as it were, poured into Jeremiah's heart, and he tried to restrain it in vain. With emphatic abruptness he suddenly turns to himself, and using the imperative mood, bids himself give full utterance to God's message. And the message is to reach all. Five stages of human life are successively marked out. The children with no higher object in life than a game of play in the streets (Zech. viii. 5). The youths in what in modern phrase we should call their *clubs*, for such

of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with *him that is* full of days.

12 And their houses shall be turned unto others, *with their* fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one [c] *is* given to [c] covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

14 They have [d] healed also the [†] hurt *of the daughter* of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

15 Were they [e] ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time *that* I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the [f] old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find [g] rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*.

[c] Isai. 56. 11. chap. 8. 10.

[d] chap. 8. 11. Ezek. 13. 10.

[†] Heb. *bruise*, or, *breach*.

[e] chap. 3. 3. & 8. 12.

[f] Isai. 8. 20, Mal. 4. 4. Luke 16. 29.

[g] Matt. 11. 29.

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is the meaning of the word rendered *assembly*, whether they meet there for friendly converse (Ps. lxxxix. 7), for merriment (Jer. xv. 17), or for that love of secret combination so natural at their age (Prov. xv. 22; and cp. Ps. lv. 14). Next comes middle-age, represented by the man and his wife: then the *elder*, the man who has grown-up children, but is still strong and vigorous. Lastly, the man *whose days are full*, whose work is done, and who has but one thing left—to die.

12. *turned*] Lit. *turned round*, violently transferred. Houses, fields, wives, all they most valued, and most jealously kept to themselves—all in a moment are gone. They have turned round, and every relation of life is changed.

13. *given to covetousness*] Lit. **every one has gained gains.** The verb does not necessarily imply anything wrong. Its force would be lost in Job xxvii. 8, if anything more were meant by it than simple gaining. But the temper of mind which gains the world is not that which gains heaven.

falsely] Rather, *fraudulently*.

14. *They have healed*] Rather, *tried to heal*.

hurt] Lit. *breaking* (ch. iv. 6).

of the daughter] These words are printed in Italics for a different reason from the usual one, namely, to shew that the reading is uncertain. They are omitted by a majority of MSS., but found in most of the versions. As no reason can be given for their omission, while their presence can be explained by supposing them borrowed from ch. viii. 11, the MSS. are probably right in rejecting them.

slightly] The Hebr. is, *according to, i.e.* as if it were, *a trifle*. The LXX. give the exact force, ἐξουθενοῦντες, *making nothing of it*. This cry of *peace* was doubtless based upon Josiah's reforms.

15. *Were they ashamed*] Or,

They are brought to shame because they have *committed abomination:*
Shame nevertheless they feel not;
To blush nevertheless they know not;
Therefore they shall fall among **the falling;**
At the time **when** *I visit them, they shall* **stumble,** *saith Jehovah.*

The Hebr. is not interrogative, but expresses a fact, namely, that their conduct was a disgrace to them, though they did not feel it as such. Abomination has its usual meaning of idolatry (iv. 1).

16. *Stand ye in the ways*] This verse may be thus paraphrased. God's prophet has declared that a great national calamity is at hand. Surely as prudent men you will try to escape it. Make inquiries therefore. Stand in the ways; look about you; ask the passers by. Your country was once prosperous and blessed. Try to learn what were the paths trodden in those days by your ancestors. Discover what the good path was which led them to happiness. See whether it was the path of idolatry, of moral corruption, of private greed; or the path of true religion, of purity of life, of self-sacrifice. Whichever was the path which ensured their happiness, choose it, and walk earnestly therein, and find thereby rest for your souls. *Find* is really an imperative. *Walk therein, and find rest for yourselves.* The Fathers often use this verse in a secondary application, contrasting with the *old tracks*, many in number, and narrow to walk in (נתיבות, "foot-tracks"), which are the Law and the Prophets, Christ the one *goodway* (דרך, "the high-road"). See Cyr. in Joh. xiv. 4, Theod. in loc., &c.

17 Also I set watchmen over you, *saying*, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

18 ¶ Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them.

19 Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

20 [h] To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish.

22 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the [i] north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth.

[h] Isai. 1. 11. & 66. 3. Amos 5. 21. Micah 6. 6, &c.

[i] chap. 1. 15. & 5. 15. & 10. 22.

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17. *watchmen*] *Zophim* (1 S. i. 1), used of sentinels (ib. xiv. 16), but metaphorically of the prophets (Isai. lii. 8, lvi. 10; Ezek. iii. 17; Hab. ii. 1).

the sound of the trumpet] This was the signal for flight (vi. 1; Amos iii. 6); and similarly the object of the prophet's warnings was to move men to try to escape from God's judgments.

18. *hear, ye nations*] As the Jewish Church refuses to hear God's voice speaking by the prophets, He now summons the Gentiles to witness its condemnation.

O congregation] There has been much discussion whether this is to be referred (with the Targ., Ewald, &c.) to the Jews, or (with Rosenm., Umbreit, &c.) to the Gentiles. The Syriac understands it of the Church among the Gentiles, whoever there belonged to God (Rom. ii. 14). More probably it means a general assemblage of all mankind. And thus then, God summons three witnesses to hear His sentence. (1) The Gentiles. (2) All mankind, Jews and Gentiles. (3) Nature (see next verse).

what is *among them*] Rather, *what happens*, takes place, **in them**, the force of which is correctly given by the Vulg. *Cognosce quanta ego faciam eis, Know what great things I will do to them.*

19. *Hear, O earth*] A decree so solemnly proclaimed can be of no light importance: and therefore the Fathers not without reason understood it of the rejection of the Jews from being the Church (Basil, 'Contr. Jud.' Serm. 38; Cyprian, 'Test. adv. Jud.' p. 21; Iren. 'adv. Hær.' IV. 70). The pronoun *I* is emphatic in the Hebrew.

20. *incense from Sheba*] The "thus Sabæum" of Virg. 'Æn.' I. 416. See Isai. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22.

the sweet cane] Lit. *the good cane*, the same as *the scented cane* of Exod. xxx. 23, there rendered "sweet calamus." (See note there.) It was brought in the caravans *from a far country*, India.

your burnt offerings] It is remarkable that this rejection of ritual observances is made by the two prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, who chiefly assisted the two pious kings Hezekiah and Josiah in restoring the temple service. God rejects not the ceremonial service, but the substitution of it for personal holiness and morality. If it be the expression of love and piety present in the heart, it is the beauty of holiness: if it take the place of love and duty, it is an abomination. On the views of the prophets, see 1 S. xv. 22; Isai. i. 11; Micah vi. 8, &c.

21. *stumblingblocks*] The proper arrangement of the verse is as follows:

Behold, ¶ **give unto** *this people* **causes of stumbling,**
And they shall stumble against them:
Fathers and sons together, *the neighbour and his friend shall perish.*

This is the natural consequence of their conduct. Their service of Jehovah was a systematic hypocrisy: how could men whose religion was one of deceit, walk uprightly in their conduct with their fellow-men? When God then says that He lays stumblingblocks in men's way, we must remember that it is by the general action of His moral law (James i. 13, 14), by which wilful sin in one point reacts upon the whole moral nature (ib. ii. 10).

22. *Thus saith...*] In this final section the conquest of Jerusalem, which was also the subject of *vv.* 1—5, is again set forth, and the justice of God's dealings shewn by Judah's state being compared to that of reprobate silver.

the north country] See i. 14, iv. 6.

shall be raised] Or, **shall be awakened.** The lust of conquest shall be awakened in

23 They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they *are* cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion.

24 We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

25 Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy *and* fear *is* on every side.

26 ¶ O daughter of my people, gird *thee* with [k] sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes: make thee mourning, *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

[k] chap. 4. 8. & 25. 34.

27 I have set thee *for* a tower

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their minds, and urge them to distant expeditions.

the sides of the earth] Or *ends*, the most distant regions, see ch. xxv. 32; Ps. xlviii. 2; Isai. xiv. 13.

23. *spear*] Properly, a javelin for hurling at the enemy. Goliath carried one made of brass slung behind his back between his shoulders (1 S. xvii. 6, where see Note). Jeremiah again mentions it in ch. l. 42 as the ordinary weapon of the Babylonians, and we find it in Layard's 'Mon. of Nin.' Series II. Plates 19, 20, 21, 22, &c. For the bow, see iv. 29, v. 16, Bonomi, 'Nin. and its Pal.' p. 321.

cruel] The word means *ruthless, inhuman*. In the Assyrian monuments we constantly see warriors putting the vanquished to death; in others, rows of impaled victims hang round the walls of the besieged towns; and in others, men are collecting in heaps hands cut from the vanquished (Layard, Series II. Pl. 23, 37, 47, Bonomi, pp. 190, 276). Sennacherib even boasts that he salted the heads of slaughtered Elamites, and sent them in wicker baskets to Nineveh. 'Records of the Past,' I. 49.

their voice roareth] (See Isai. xvii. 12, 13.)

they ride upon horses] See iv. 13, and Layard, 'Nin. and its Remains,' II. 356: also Job xxxix. 24; Hab. i. 8. A colon, or even a full stop should be put after *horses*.

set in array] This is sing., and shews that a new clause has begun. It—the whole army, and not the cavalry only—is *set in array*.

as men for war against thee] Rather, **as a warrior for battle** *against thee*. The word *milhâmâh, of war*, is to be supplied after *man*, having been omitted because it occurs immediately again.

24. *We have heard the fame thereof*] Lit. *We have heard its hearing*. The prophet speaking in the name of the Jewish people describes the effect upon them of the news of Nebuchadnezzar's approach.

our hands wax feeble] **Are relaxed.** It is the opposite of what is said in *v.* 23 of the enemy, *They have laid hold on bow and javelin*, as the verb there used means to hold firmly. Here terror makes the hands of the Jews hold their weapons with nerveless grasp.

25. *Go not forth...*] The daughter of Zion, *i.e.* the inhabitants of Jerusalem, is warned not to stray outside the fortifications.

for the sword of the enemy] The Hebr. lit. is *for to the enemy a sword, i.e. for the enemy is armed*, he has a commission from God to execute judgment. See ch. xii. 12; Isai. x. 5, and note on Ps. xvii. 13.

fear is on every side] Mâgôr-Missâbîb, Jeremiah's watchword, cp. xx. 3, 10; Ps. xxxi. 13, where see note. The *and* inserted before it in the A. V. should be omitted.

26. *wallow thyself in ashes*] Rashi is the authority for this rendering, now generally adopted (see also ch. xxv. 34; Ezek. xxvii. 30; Micah i. 10). The LXX. and Vulg. render it merely *sprinkle thyself with ashes*, the symbol of great grief (2 S. xiii. 19; Job ii. 8). But violent distress is wont to find relief in eccentric actions, and thus the wallowing in ashes shews that Jerusalem's grief is unbearable.

as for *an only son*] See Amos viii. 10; Zech. xii. 10.

most bitter...] Lit. *a lamentation of bitternesses*, in which the plural is both intensive, and also shews that there is more than one cause for grief.

the spoiler] Nebuchadnezzar.

27. *I have set thee*] As the last four verses of this chapter are all difficult, it is perhaps advisable to give their exact rendering together:

27. I have set thee among my people as a prover of ore,
And thou shalt know and try their way.
28. They are all of them rebels of rebels (*i.e.* utter rebels):
Slander-walkers, *mere* copper and iron,
Corrupters all of them.
29. The bellows glow: from their fire lead *only!*
In vain hath the smelter smelted,
And the wicked are not separated.
30. Refuse-silver have men called them:
For Jehovah hath refused them.

The intermixture throughout of the terms of metallurgy and moral words is remarkable.

[l] chap. 1. 18. & 15. 20. *and* [l] a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

28 They *are* all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: *they are* [m] brass and iron; they *are* all corrupters.

[m] Ezek. 22. 18.

29 The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

30 [n] Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

[n] Isai. 1. 22. Or, *Refuse silver.*

Jeremiah never forgets his purpose. A mere artist would have thought only of his metaphor: the prophet uses it simply to give force to his teaching. See Note at end of Chapter.

28. *walking with slanders*] Lit. *walkers of slander.* The phrase often occurs elsewhere, *e.g. Thou shalt not walk for slander among thy people*, Lev. xix. 16; *A walker of slander revealeth secrets*, Prov. xi. 13, xx. 19.

29. *The bellows are burned*] A good sense has been put upon this, namely, that the bellows are consumed, worn out by continual blowing. The prophet has exhausted all his efforts, and his heart consumed by the heat of divine inspiration can labour no more. Other commentators translate *The bellows snort, i.e.* blow furiously. More probably *The bellows glow* with the strong heat of the fire.

the lead is consumed of the fire] See Note at end of Chapter.

plucked away] **Separated.** The smelter's object is to separate the gold and silver from the dross.

30. *Reprobate*] *i.e. refuse-silver* (marg.), not really silver, but the dross.

the LORD hath rejected them] This then is the end. The smelter is God's prophet: the bellows the breath of inspiration: the flux his earnestness in preaching. But in vain does the fervour of prophecy essay to melt the hearts of the people. They are so utterly corrupt, that no particle even of pure metal can be found in them. All the refiner's art is in vain. They have rejected all God's gifts and motives for their repentance, and therefore *Jehovah has rejected them* as an alloy too utterly adulterate to repay the refiner's toil.

NOTES on CHAP. VI. 2, 7, 9, 15, 27, 28, 29.

2. The extraordinary rendering *comely* is due to the Masorites, who read נָוָה = נָאנָה = *beautiful*, and on their authority Ges. and Fürst admit the word into their lexicons, though never found elsewhere. The full form נָאנָה extant here in a few MSS. has no weight, as their tendency is to substitute the Kri for the C'tib. The meaning thus given to the passage is most unsatisfactory. The shepherds drive their flocks to Jerusalem, because she is a comely (woman, as the A. V. adds). On the other hand נָוֶה is a word of constant occurrence in the Scriptures, the meaning of which is exactly given only in the Syriac. The A. V. renders it *fold* in Isai. lxv. 10, *folds*, Jer. xxiii. 3, but more frequently *habitation* (Exod. xv. 13; 2 S. xv. 25, &c.). It is what the Arabs call a *douar*, a pasture, on which the shepherds with their flocks have made a temporary encampment for mutual protection. Naturally to such a pasture the shepherds, *i.e.* kings (ii. 3), drive their flocks, their armies, and Jeremiah describes their eagerness for the assault in the most spirited terms (*vv.* 4, 5).

7. The words rendered *As a fountain casteth out her waters* are very difficult. For the C'tib בּוֹר *bor, a cistern*, the Masorites have written בֵּיר *bair*, but we must not assume that they meant to give it a different signification. The versions and Jerome nearly unanimously render it *cistern*, and probably the change of spelling was dictated by the same fancy which made them write Naid for Nod in Gen. iv. 16. In the Moabite stone the word twice occurs in lines 24 and 25, *There was no cistern inside Kir in its citadel* (?), *and I said to all the people Make you each one a cistern in his house.* So at Jerusalem each house had its cistern capable of storing up rain-water sufficient for the supply of many months. But the other word is really uncertain. Literally it means *he made to dig*, the verb only occurring elsewhere in 2 K. xix. 24 = Isai. xxxvii. 25, of digging for water. The rendering of the A. V., though adopted by Gesenius, Keil, Nägelsb., &c., cannot be obtained by any fair philological process from the root-meaning as given above. From the same root the Syriac renders *As a cistern gathers*, and the Targ. *As a cistern sustains* its waters, *i.e.* they give it a general signification drawn from the ordinary use of a *makor*, or reservoir (ch. ii. 13). Equally grammatical is the formation of the verb from קוּר *to be cool* adopted by the LXX. and Vulg., and as the meaning of *cistern* is certain, there seems no alternative but to adopt it. Coolness suggests only pleasant ideas in the East, and *a cistern keeping its*

waters cool would signify the preserving of them fresh and fit for use.

9. The word סלסלות occurs only in this place, and the translation *baskets* rests upon its resemblance to סלים in Gen. xl. 16, 18, but has the support of the LXX. and Vulg. It more probably belongs to the same class of words as זלזלים *vine-twigs*, Isai. xviii. 5, and תלתלים *vine-tendrils*, to which the Shulamite in Cant. v. 11 compares the curling ringlets of her beloved. The meaning of the root סלל *to twine* confirms the rendering in the footnote *tendrils*.

15. The form פְּקֻדָתִים is irregular: elsewhere it is פְּקֻדָתָם; cp. with עֵת ch. x. 15, xlvi. 21, l. 27, li. 18; and with שְׁנַת ch. xi. 23, xxiii. 12, xlviii. 44.

27. The versions all translate בָּחוֹן *a tester of metals*, a meaning it undoubtedly possesses, but our translators, having made up their minds that the next word מִבְצָר was *a fortress*, translated בָּחוֹן *a tower* on the analogy of בַּחַן *a watch-tower* (Isai. xxxii. 14), or possibly of the Kri בָּחוֹן in Isai. xxiii. 13. These words are both grammatically formed from the root בָּחַן *to look closely*, but בָּחוֹן is an active form, which alone ought to settle the question. The word can only signify one who looks closely at, and examines anything. The word for *fortress* is not so easy. The Syr. and Vulg. seem to have taken it in its ordinary sense of a fortress, but attach it as an epithet to בָּחוֹן, rendering *a mighty metal-tester*—a prover of metals firm like a fortress. More probably מִבְצָר signifies *gold and silver ore*. The root בָּצַר means *to cut*, and בֶּצֶר (Job xxii. 24) is said by the great lexicographer Jonah ben Gannach to mean *ore*. He renders in the same way בָּצָר in Job xxxvi. 19: and מִבְצָר would be the concrete subs. from the same root, and would literally signify *that which is cut from the mine, ore*. Ewald reads מְבַצֵּר *a cutter of ores*, to see if they contain gold or silver. Henderson and Graf adopt the same reading, but have recourse to the Arabic, a language which has done much for the corruption of Hebrew etymology. Comparing it with مبصر they translate *a seer*=a tester.

28. *Grievous revolters*. The Syr., Targ. and Vulg. read שׂרי, or take סרי as equivalent to it (as do the Masorites). Thus understood the meaning is *All of them are princes of rebels*. The A. V. is far best.

29. The A.V. accepts the correction of the Masorites מאש תם *from fire is consumed*, but the Kri reads this as one word מאשתם *from their fire*. Both readings have their difficulties. If with the Syriac we take the C'tib, it requires the invention of a new word for fire (*eshâh* instead of *ésh*): if with the LXX. and Vulg. we adopt the Kri, we have the verb masc. and the noun fem. As regards the sense, lead was used by the antients as a flux to assist the silver in melting. If we take the C'tib, the meaning will be, that when the smelter after all his labours comes to examine the lead, he will find that it contains no particle of silver: while the Kri will mean, that though the smelter continue his labours till the lead is entirely oxydised, he will still fail in extracting any silver from the ore. Upon the whole the C'tib is best.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Jeremiah is sent to call for true repentance, to prevent the Jews' captivity.* 8 *He rejecteth their vain confidence,* 12 *by the example of Shiloh.* 17 *He threateneth them for their idolatry.* 21 *He rejecteth the sacrifices of the disobedient.* 29 *He exhorteth to mourn for their abominations in Tophet,* 32 *and the judgments for the same.*

SECOND PORTION OF JEREMIAH'S FOURTH GROUP OF PROPHECIES.

CHAPS. VII.—X.

Sermon in the temple upon the fast-day.

There can be little doubt that we have in these four chapters the very words addressed by Jeremiah to the people as they flocked into Jerusalem from the country, to attend the solemn services in the temple upon a fast-day. As we learn from ch. xxvi, Jehoiakim had just ascended the throne, and was so incensed at this sermon that he would have put Jeremiah to death but for the influence of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, one of the most powerful princes of the time. With the accession of Jehoiakim all hope of averting the ruin of the country had passed away. He represented the reverse of his father's policy, and possibly for this reason had been passed over by the people of the land at his father's death, in order to place his younger brother Jehoahaz upon the throne. As the king of Egypt upon his arrival at Jerusalem immediately deposed Jehoahaz, and made Jehoiakim king, we may reasonably conclude that he belonged to that faction, who placed their sole hope of deliverance in a close alliance with Pharaoh-Necho. As this party rejected the distinctive principles of the theocracy, and the king was personally an irreligious man, the maintenance of the worship of Jehovah was no longer an object of the public care; though "the high places

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all *ye of* Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, [a] Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

[a] chap 18. 11. & 26. 13.

4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, *are* these.

5 For if ye throughly amend your

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of Tophet" were probably not so much erected by the king's command, as simply connived at. Times of trouble, like those which followed upon Josiah's defeat, and the reduction of Judæa to a state of vassalage (2 K. xxiii. 33), were ever those in which men sought relief from their miseries by these bloodstained rites. At this time, then, upon a public fast-day, appointed probably because of the calamities under which the nation was labouring, Jeremiah was commanded by Jehovah to take his stand at the gate of the temple, and address to the people as they entered words of solemn warning. In vain do they trust in Josiah's splendid restoration of the temple services, vii. 4, 14, viii. 8, 9, as long as heathen abominations exist within it, vii. 30, and moral corruption spreads ever deeper and wider throughout all ranks of the people, vii. 9, viii. 6, &c., ix. 1—8. As many of his hearers were previously unknown to Jeremiah, he farther repeats in his address several of the warnings he had already urged upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and finally points out that there is a way of escape, and that God's judgments may yet be averted. The whole sermon therefore divides itself into three parts; (1) beginning with the temple it points out the folly of the superstitious confidence placed by the people in it, while they neglect the sole sure foundation of a nation's hope. A sanctuary long polluted by immorality must inevitably be destroyed, and sanctuaries older than Jerusalem had thus perished by God's righteous judgment, vii. 2—viii. 3. (2) There next follow complaints of a more general character, in which the growing wickedness of the nation is pointed out, and especially of that portion of it who by their position were the leaders and teachers of the people, viii. 4—ix. 24. (3) Lastly the prophet shews the possibility of averting the evils impending upon the nation, and the grounds which alone could inspire them with trustworthy hopes, ix 25—x. 25.

CHAP. VII. 1, 2. *Stand in the gate*] The temple had several entrances, 2 Chro. iv. 9, and one, at which subsequently we find Jeremiah commanded to deliver a prophecy, is described as that by which the kings entered, ch. xvii. 19. The gate or door here mentioned is probably that of the *inner* court, where Baruch read Jeremiah's roll, ch. xxxvi. 10, incorrectly translated there the *higher* court. In ch. xxvi. 2 it is simply called *the court*. To set the scene then clearly before us we must bear in mind that it was an inner doorway at which the prophet stood, and that the people whom he addressed were assembled in the outer court.

all ye of *Judah*] Better, literally, **all Judah**. In ch. xxvi. 2 the words are *all the cities of Judah*; it was evidently a great national solemnity, and therefore well fitted for a more than ordinarily earnest appeal to the national conscience.

3. *Amend your ways and your doings*] Literally, *Make good your ways*, your habits, modes of life, *and your doings*, the separate actions upon which the formation of habits depends. For a similar connection of ways and doings see Zech. i. 6.

and I will cause you to dwell...] Or, **I will let you dwell**. The literal rendering gives as usual the more appropriate sense. If the people repented, instead of being led into captivity God would maintain their national existence. It is a promise, not of anything new, but of the continuance of an old blessing. Jeremiah plainly had in view the words of Deut. vii. 12—15, but shews that the promises there given belong, not to a ceremonial observance of the law, but to the hearty keeping of God's commandments.

4. *The temple of the LORD*] This is thrice repeated, to emphasize the rejection of the cry which was ever upon the lips of the false prophets. In their view the maintenance of the temple service was a talisman or charm sufficient to avert all evil. Jewish interpreters however delight in finding some occult reason for the repetition. Abravanel thinks it was because of the three main doors of the temple: J. Kimchi because of its three courts: Rashi because of the three great festivals, at which all must appear at the temple: while the Targum explains it of the three great acts of worship, service, sacrifice, and prayer. Galatinus ('de Arc.' v. 19) mentions also Rabbins who saw in these words that the hope of a third temple was in vain.

are *these*] This has been explained both of the buildings of the temple, to which Jeremiah is supposed to point; and also, as it is

ways and your doings; if ye throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

6 *If* ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

8 ¶ Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.

9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

10 And come and stand before me in this house, [f] which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

11 Is [b] this house, which is called by my name, become a [c] den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD.

[f] Heb. wherein my name is called.
[b] Isai. 56. 7.
[c] Matth. 21. 13. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46.

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masc., of the men there present. The former is the right interpretation. God does require men to be His temple (1 Cor. iii. 16; Isai. lvii. 15, lxvi. 1, 2); but the Jews put their trust in the material buildings.

5. *For if ye throughly amend...*] See *v.* 3. In this and the two following verses we have a summary of the conditions indispensable on man's part, before he can plead the terms of the covenant in his favour.

between a man and his neighbour] According to the Jewish idiom this simply means *between one another*. The question *Who is my neighbour?* Luke x. 29, is thus the more remarkable as the Jews habitually used the word as equivalent to *any one*.

6. *the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*] Compare ch. v. 28; Deut. xiv. 29, xxiv. 19—21, &c.

in this place] *i.e.* in Jerusalem. The prophet refers to innocent blood shed there judicially. Of one such judicial murder Jehoiakim had already been guilty (xxvi. 23);—and of all murders that is the worst which is committed by unjust law. See Note at end of Chapter.

7. *Then will I cause you to dwell*] Rather, **I will let you dwell**, as in *v.* 3.

in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever] The A.V. puts a comma after *fathers*, but possibly only to indicate a pause in reading, or from mistaking the power of the Hebr. accent. The Holy Land had been bestowed upon Israel "to from ever and unto ever," the strongest formula for a perpetual gift. Why then do not the Jews still possess a land thus eternally given them? Because God never bestows anything unconditionally. The land was bestowed upon them by virtue of a covenant, itself called a covenant of eternity, Gen. xvii. 7;—the conditions of this covenant, as recited in *vv.* 5, 6, the Jews had broken, and the gift reverted to the original donor.

8. *lying words*] Either the words of false prophets, or it may be used generally for false, unfounded arguments.

9, 10. *Will ye steal...*] In opposition to their words we have now their deeds, and these are described in a most forcible manner by a succession of infinitives:

What! to steal, to murder, and to commit adultery,
And to swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal,
And to walk after strange gods that ye knew not;
10. *And then have ye come, and stood before me in this house on which my name is called,*
And said, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

We are delivered] Ewald points this so as to make it signify *Deliver us;* and the Syriac must have read the same, as it renders *And ye say, Deliver us! though ye are doing all these evil deeds.* But this alteration spoils the argument. Jeremiah accuses them of trusting in the ceremonial of the temple instead of leading holy lives. You break, he says, the ten commandments, and then you go to the temple; and when the service is over you say, We are delivered. We have atoned for our past actions, and may start afresh with easy minds upon a new course of wickedness. Religion thus becomes the means merely of quieting the conscience for the past, whereas its proper office is to enable men to repent of the past and lead holy lives for the future.

11. *a den*] The limestone ranges of Palestine are full of caverns suited to be the dwellings of outcasts, such as those in which David found refuge.

of robbers] Lit. *tearers*, those who rob with violence. In Isai. xxxv. 9, it is applied to *ravenous* wild beasts. The temple, then, by the superstitious value attached to its services, actually encouraged evil-doers: for observe, a den of robbers is not the scene of their crimes,

12 But go ye now unto my place which *was* in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see [d] what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.

[d] 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Psal. 78. 60. chap. 26. 6.

13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I [e] called you, but ye answered not;

[e] Prov. 1. 24. Isai. 65. 12. & 66. 4.

14 Therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to [f] Shiloh.

[f] 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11. Psal. 78. 60. & 132. 6. chap. 26. 6.

15 And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your

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but the place which shelters them. It had been consecrated to God, in order to shew that those who worshipped there must also be devoted to His service. Now that it harbours miscreants, must it not as inevitably be destroyed as a den of robbers would be by any righteous ruler?

12. *But go ye now unto my place which* was *in Shiloh*] Apparently it was this argument which so roused the indignation of the people (ch. xxvi. 6, 9, 11). The ark, Jeremiah shews, had not always been at Jerusalem. The place first chosen, as the centre of the nation's worship, was Shiloh, a town to the north of Bethel, situated in the powerful tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xviii. 1, where see note). Lost thence by the sins of Eli's sons, we next read of it at Kirjath-Jearim, 1 S. vii. 2, then at Nob, 1 S. xxi. 1, 6, and lastly at Gibeon, 1 Chro. xxi. 29. Its presence therefore was no proof that Jerusalem might not be destroyed. Many commentators have supposed that Shiloh had suffered grievous ill-treatment at the hands of the Assyrians: but this rather weakens the argument. More telling was its utter insignificancy. Once the religious capital of the whole confederacy, it had entirely dropped from men's minds. Even Jeroboam had preferred Bethel to it for one of his calves; and no trace of its former sanctity seems to have lingered about its remains. The words of Ps. lxxviii. 58—64 go far to settle the question. The ruin of Shiloh is ascribed there to the idolatry which prevailed in Israel after the death of Joshua, and while every particular mentioned in the book of Samuel is referred to—the going of the ark into captivity, the slaughter of Hophni and Phinehas, the refusal of the widow of the latter to lament for her husband's death—we further learn that the victorious Philistines inflicted fearful cruelties upon the inhabitants. Previously it must have been a populous town: since the Benjamites were able to seize from thence upon the occasion of its annual festival no less than two hundred virgins to be their wives (Judg. xx. 47, xxi. 12, 19, 23). In Jeremiah's time it still existed as a mean village (ch. xli. 5), but all knowledge of it was afterwards lost till Robinson, 'Bibl. Res.' II. 269—276, identified its site with that of the modern Seilûn, the ruins of which are so insignificant as to bear out St Jerome's remark, "At Silo, where once was the tabernacle and ark of the Lord, there can scarcely be pointed out the foundation of an altar." Comm. in Zeph. i. 14.

at the first] In the first stage, the first period of the existence of the Jewish commonwealth, Shiloh was to the judges what Jerusalem subsequently was to the kings: and as the fall of Shiloh through the wickedness of Eli's sons marked the period when the government by judges was to pass away, and the second stage begin; so the king's power perished at the fall of Jerusalem, and left the way clear for the third stage of Jewish polity, government by the scribes.

13. *rising up early and speaking*] A proverbial expression for "speaking zealously and earnestly." So in *v.* 25 God is said *to rise up early to send* the prophets, *i.e.* He sends them abundantly, without waiting for great and pressing occasions. Compare chh. xxv. 4, xxvi. 5, xxix. 19. It is used only by Jeremiah.

14. *unto* this *house*] Graf concludes from the analogy of this passage that there was not only a tent or tabernacle at Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1; 1 S. ii. 22), but also substantial buildings. So it is called *the house of God in Shiloh*, Judg. xviii. 31, *the temple of Jehovah*, 1 S. i. 9, iii. 3, and *the house of Jehovah in Shiloh*, 1 S. i. 24. He further imagines that these buildings had remained in existence till the captivity of the ten tribes, and were then profaned in some very marked manner. These views he has defended with much ability in his 'Programma de templo Silonensi,' 4to. Mis. 1855. The first part is probably true, but the latter part is entirely inconsistent with Jeroboam's conduct, who would certainly have endeavoured to revive the associations connected with Shiloh had it been in any way possible.

15. *all your brethren*, even *the whole seed of Ephraim*] That is, the whole of the nine northern tribes. Their *casting out*, an act both of violence and contempt, after the ark had so long rested among them, was a plain proof that the possession of the symbols of God's presence does not secure a Church or nation from rejection, if morally it prove itself unworthy of its privileges.

brethren, *even* the whole seed of Ephraim.

16 Therefore [e] pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee.

17 ¶ Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

18 [h] The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the [i] queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

19 Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: *do they* not *provoke* themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

20 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this

[e] Exod. 32. 10. chap. 11. 14. & 14. 11.

[h] chap. 44. 19.

[i] Or, *frame*, or, *workmanship of heaven.*

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16. *Therefore pray not thou for this people*] Intercessory prayer was forbidden, because the state of the people was hopeless. They had reached that stage in which men sin without any sense of guilt (see 1 John v. 16).

cry] *i.e. a prayer offered aloud.* The Hebr. word *rinnah* signifies anything done aloud; thus it is used of *songs*, and *singing*, in Isai. xxxv. 10, xlviii. 20: of a *proclamation*, or rather of a spontaneous cry addressed by the soldiers to one another, 1 K. xxii. 36: and so finally as here of *prayer*, ch. xiv. 12; 1 K. viii. 28.

neither make intercession to me] To intercede was part of a prophet's duty, ch. xviii. 20, and in ch. xiv. 7—9 we have an intercessory prayer offered by Jeremiah, but not heard, ib. 11, because man's prayer may not stop the course of the divine justice. The intercession of Moses often prevailed with God, Num. xi. 2, xiv. 13—20, xvi. 22, because the progress of the people then was upwards; the progress now was from bad to worse, and therefore in ch. xv. 1 we read that the intercession even of Moses and Samuel would profit nothing. For Samuel see 1 S. xii. 23.

17. *Seest thou not...*] The proof of the hopeless immorality of the people is this, that they worship the most impure of all the heathen deities (1) generally, in the cities of Judah, and not in the capital only; and (2) publicly and without disguise *in the streets of Jerusalem*, the Hebr. word including also all the open places there (vi. 11). Such public idolatry could have been practised only in the reign of an irreligious king like Jehoiakim.

18. *The children...the fathers...the women ...*] All members of the family take part in this idolatry, though essentially it was a female orgy.

cakes] *Cavvânim*; the word occurs only here, and in chap. xliv. 19. Suidas describes these cakes as "made of barley kneaded with oil;" Theodoret as "cakes flavoured with raisins and pine-seeds." De Sacy ('Chrest. Ar.' II. 95, 'Abdoll.' 98) thinks they were the same as the confectionary called in Egypt Neîdeh, and made of malted grain so as to require neither honey nor sugar to sweeten it. However made they were probably very similar to those offered at Athens to Artemis in the middle of the month Munychion. These were round like the full moon, and covered with lights, and finally were burnt in her honour, forming with the added libation the symbol of a eucharist. (See σελῆναι, Hermann, 'Gottesdienstl. Alterthum. der Griechen,' ed. 2, p. 146, Anmerk. 13, and p. 414.)

to the queen of heaven] The Queen of Heaven was a Persian and Assyrian deity, who was supposed to symbolize a quality possessed by moonlight of giving to nature its receptive power, as the sun represented its quickening power. By the union of these two influences the blossoms fructified, and the fruits matured. The moon thus became generally the symbol of female productiveness, and was worshipped as such at Babylon under the name of *Molatta*, *i.e.* mother, slightly altered by Herodotus to Mylitta. The disgraceful usages of which he speaks as forming part of her worship, and to which every woman was obliged once to submit, continued according to St Ephrem Syrus to exist to his day. It is a mistake to confound this goddess with Astarte, or "Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians," 1 K. xi. 5. For her name (עַשְׁתֹּרֶת = אֶסְתֵּר = ستارة) means a *star*, *i.e.* Venus, while the Queen of Heaven is the moon. The attributes of the two, however, were constantly confused by the ancients. A representation of the Assyrian Venus may be seen in Layard, 'Nin. and its Remains,' II. 456. For the reading represented in the margin see Note at end of Chapter.

19. *Do they provoke...*] Lit. **Is it not themselves, to the shame of their faces?** The consequences of man's sin can only be shame and grief to the sinner.

20. *shall be poured out...*] The verb employed here is of rare occurrence. It is used however in Exod. ix. 33 of the downpour of rain. Because then of their idolatry the justice of God is poured down, first upon Jerusalem

place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

21 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; [f] Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

22 For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, [†] concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:

23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, [k] Obey my voice, and [l] I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels *and* in the [‡] imagination of their evil heart, and [†] went backward, and not forward.

25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even [m] sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending *them:*

26 Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but [n] hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.

[f] Isai. 1. 11. chap. 6. 20. Amos 5. 21.

[†] Heb. *concerning the matter of.*

[k] Deut. 6. 3. [l] Exod. 19. 5. Lev. 26. 12.

[‡] Or, *stubbornness.* [†] Heb. *were.*

[m] 2 Chron. 36. 15.

[n] chap. 16. 12.

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as the centre of the theocracy, and then upon the whole land, as a consuming fire.

upon man, and upon beast] God's anger falls upon man absolutely: upon the brute and inanimate creation only mediately, because of man. All creation in some mysterious way shares in man's fall and restoration, Rom. viii. 19—22.

21. *Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh*] These words have been variously interpreted. Ewald and Henderson regard them as spoken contemptuously: your burnt-offerings ought to be entirely consumed by fire, Lev. i. 9, but you may eat the flesh of them if you choose: for without obedience all sacrifices alike are nothing. Graf further paraphrases the words *and eat flesh* as implying that it was nothing but common flesh, the flesh of sacrifices unhallowed through want of faith in the offerer. But this contradicts the whole course of the prophet's reasoning. He does not accuse the Jews of violating the laws of sacrifices, as they would have done by eating burnt-offerings, but of trusting to the outward rite without that inward piety of which it should be the symbol. The meaning is, Increase your sacrifices as you will. Add burnt-offering to peace-offerings. All is in vain as long as you neglect the indispensable requirements of obedience and moral purity. The verb translated *Put* is found also in Deut. xxix. 19 in the sense of adding one thing to another, and is there rendered "to add drunkenness to thirst." *Eat flesh* is equivalent to *sacrifice*. With certain exceptions the flesh of animals offered in sacrifice was eaten by the offerers, and this meal was regarded as a symbol of reconciliation. God and man partook of the same victim, and so were made friends. It is remarkable that this passage, Jer. vii. 21—28, is read in the synagogue as the Haftara, or Lesson from the Prophets, after the Parashah, Lev. vi.—viii., or Lesson from the Law. As these chapters contain a summary of the Levitical sacrifices with the consecration of Aaron and his sons to offer them, the selection of such a Haftara shews that the Jews throughly understood that their sacrifices were not an end but a means.

22. *I spake not unto your fathers...concerning*] My purpose in giving the ceremonial law is not fulfilled by the mere offering of sacrifices, because they were not the end of the law, but a means for spiritual instruction. See on this verse Note at end of Chapter.

23. *Obey my voice...*] These words are not found verbatim in the Pentateuch, but are a summary of its principles, see ch. xi. 4. Sacrifice is never the final cause of the covenant, but always obedience, Exod. xix. 5, 6; Lev. xi. 45; and cp. Exod. xx., Deut. xi., in which two chapters the moral object of the Mosaic dispensation is most clearly taught. In connection with Jeremiah's argument it is important to notice the remarkable words in Amos v. 25, which, taken in conjunction with Josh. v. 2—7, prove that the ceremonial law was not observed during the forty years' wandering in the wilderness. A thing so long in abeyance in the very time of its founder, could not be of primary importance.

24. *in the imagination*] The margin, **stubbornness**, is right; see on ch. iii. 17.

and went backward, and not forward] Lit. *and were backwards, and not forwards, i.e.* they turned their back upon me to follow their own devices. Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 57.

25. *daily*] Probably the right translation, though unusual.

27 Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.

28 But thou shalt say unto them, This *is* a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth [1] correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

29 ¶ Cut off thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast *it* away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.

30 For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

31 And they have built the [o] high

[1] *Or, instruction.*

[o] 2 Kin. 23. 10. chap. 19. 5.

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27. *Therefore thou shalt speak...*] Rather, **Though thou** *speak unto them all these* **things, yet** *will they not hearken unto thee;* **and though thou** *call unto them,* **yet** *will they not answer thee.*

The verse is not a prediction of their future conduct, but a statement of their present disobedience. Their determinate rejection of the last prophet before the captivity justifies the assertion that they were "worse than their fathers," whose circumstances had never been so urgent; and also the verdict given of them in *v.* 28.

28. *But thou shalt say*] The force of the expression would be better given by our imperative, **Say therefore** *unto them.*

This is *a nation*] *This is* **the** *nation.* Israel holds so unique a position among all nations that for it to disobey God is marvellous. See Isai. i. 3; Jer. ii. 11.

truth] Fidelity to God (see note on ch. v. 3).

is cut off from their mouth] because though they have the name of Jehovah often upon their lips and swear by Him (ch. v. 2), yet it is only profession without practice.

29. *Cut off thine hair*] A new section commences with this verse, in which Jeremiah summons the people to lament over the miserable consequences of their rejection of God. In the valley of Hinnom, where lately they offered their innocents, they shall themselves fall before the enemy in such multitudes that burial shall be impossible, and the beasts of the field unmolested shall prey upon their remains, *vv.* 29—33. The few who escape shall be carried into captivity, and the silence of desolation reign throughout the land, *v.* 34; but not till the enemy have cast the bones of their kings and heroes out of their sepulchres, ch. viii. 1, 2, and exercised such cruelty that the survivors shall long for the tranquillity of the grave, *v.* 3.

The verb *cut off* is fem., and therefore the A.V. rightly supplies *Jerusalem*, the whole community being constantly addressed as a woman, the more usual phrase being "the daughter of Zion." *The hair*, lit. *the diadem*, *nêzer:* the verb however, which means *to shear*, shews that it is used metaphorically for the hair. Shearing off the hair, though now forbidden to the Jews, was in old times the sign of mourning, Job i. 20; Micah i. 16. But besides this there is a reference to the institution of the Nazarites. In Num. vi. 7 the Nazarite's hair is called his *nêzer* or diadem, inadequately rendered by the A. V. *consecration*, but more correctly *crown* in Lev. xxi. 12, where the anointing oil is beautifully called the high-priest's diadem. Thus then, as Keil remarks, the daughter of Zion, defiled by the presence of enemies in her sanctuary, and rejected of God, must shear off the diadem of her hair, the symbol of her consecration to God, just as the Nazarite, when defiled by contact with a corpse, was to shave *his crowned head.*

cast it *away*] Neumann, who argues strongly for the retention of *nêzer*, a *crown*, in its literal sense, and not as a metaphor for the hair, sees in this a prediction of the fall of the kingly office, which was not restored at the return from the Babylonian exile. It rather sets before us the image of extreme woe, as a woman, under ordinary circumstances, would not throw away her long-cherished ornament, even if as a mark of sorrow she cut it off.

take up a lamentation on high places] **Or, lift up a** *lamentation on the bare hill-sides*, see ch. iii. 2, and note on Num. xxiii. 3. For *lamentation*, see note on 2 S. i. 17, and for *generation of his wrath* see note on *people of my wrath*, Isai. x. 6.

30. *they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name*] When had this happened? Jehoiakim had but just ascended the throne, and would scarcely so soon have reversed his father's acts. Besides too, he is set before us rather as an unjust and cruel tyrant, to whom religion was a matter of indifference, than as an idolater. It must refer then to the reign of the fanatic Manasseh, in whose time the worship of Ashtarte and of the heavenly bodies was the established religion of the land (2 K. xxi. 3—5), and the temple even used for idolatrous services. The guilt of this

places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded *them* not, neither [t] came it into my heart.

32 ¶ Therefore, behold, the days [u] come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.

33 And the [q] carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away.

34 Then will I cause to [r] cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.

[t] Heb. *came it upon my heart.*

[u] chap. 19. 6

[q] Psal. 79. 2. chap. 16. 4. & 34. 20.

[r] Isai. 24. 7. chap. 16. 9. & 25. 10. & 33. 11. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11.

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still remained because the people had never heartily accepted Josiah's reformation.

31. *the high places*] Not the word used in *v.* 29, but *bamoth*, for which see Num. xxiii. 3. Here, however, it probably means not natural hills, but artificial mounts, on which the altars were erected.

Tophet] See note on 2 K. xxiii. 10, and add that the word actually occurs in Job xvii. 6, and is there rendered in the notes *an object of spitting in the face;* and such is its meaning in this place. For Tophet is not here a proper name, as the following reasons will shew. First, as applied to Baal-worship the term is not an ordinary one, but almost peculiar to Jeremiah; and even in 2 K. xxiii. 10 it is probably borrowed from him. Next, if we compare this verse with ch. xix. 5, xxxii. 35, we find that while the three passages are in other respects almost entirely identical, the word *Baal* is in the last two substituted for *Tophet*. Now it is the ordinary practice of the prophets to substitute *Bosheth, shame*, for Baal (see ch. iii. 24), and Jeremiah uses *Tophet, an object of abhorrence*, in just the same way. For a more detailed proof see Graf. It is quite possible that even before Jeremiah's time the people may have called the place where they offered human sacrifices *the place of horror:* and this would explain the somewhat different word, *Tophteh*, used by Isaiah in ch. xxx. 33, where Hitzig rightly explains it as signifying an impure and horrible place. Possibly any place where human sacrifices were offered became a Tophet.

valley of the son of Hinnom] See note on Josh. xv. 8. Rashi's notion, adopted by Hitzig, Graf, and others, that the name may mean "the valley of the wailers," is disproved by the fact that it was so called long before human sacrifices were offered there, and by the eponymous hero being styled here and elsewhere "the son of Hinnom."

to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire] See note on Lev. xx. 2—5. This is one of the passages which shew that the children were actually burnt, though as appears from Ezek. xvi. 21 they were not burnt alive, but slain first. The other phrase used in ch. xxxii. 35 of "causing the children to pass through the fire" is not as many think a euphemism, by which the people sought to avoid the open mention of a barbarous practice, but expresses the idea which lay at the root of the sacrifice. The children by passing through the fire were purified of their earthly elements, and so entered directly into happiness.

32. *the valley of slaughter*] The place where they committed their sin shall be the place of their punishment, and as they there slew their helpless children, so shall they be slaughtered there helplessly by their enemies.

they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place] Rather, **for want of room** elsewhere. So the ancient versions. "The valley of Hinnom," according to St Jerome (in loc.), "was watered by the springs of Siloam, and was pleasant and well wooded, and at this day delightful gardens are situated there." In this lovely spot, once the place of pleasant resort, but defiled by the most solemn but most revolting of sacrifices, the dead shall be buried because all commoner places are already crowded with graves.

33. *the carcases...*] So great shall be the slaughter that burial shall become impossible, and Jerusalem shall be thereby so utterly depopulated, that in the valleys which gird it round, and in which the people used to take their walks, there shall be no solitary passer-by to interrupt the vultures and beasts of prey, gathered there to feast upon the decaying corpses. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 26.

34. *the cities of Judah*] Silence and desolation are to settle upon the whole land, for it *shall be, i.e.* shall become or be made, *desolate, khorbah*, **a waste**, used only of places which having once been inhabited have then fallen into ruin, Lev. xxvi. 31; Isai. v. 17, li. 3, lviii. 12; Mal. i. 4. In Ezek. xiii. 4 it is used of the heaps of rubbish among which jackals hide.

NOTES on CHAP. VII. 6, 18, 22.

6. *And shed not innocent blood.* In this clause there is an interchange of אל for לא, which is very difficult of explanation. Usually they differ in the same way that μὴ and οὐ differ in Greek. Here apparently there is no difference of meaning, though Keil thinks that אל implies a deeper interest on the part of the speaker.

18. There is little to be said in support of the other reading כְּלָאכֶת, *the worship or service of heaven*, incorrectly rendered in the A. V. marg. *the frame* or *workmanship of heaven*. The Syriac and LXX. nevertheless so translate it, but the latter in ch. xliv. 17 agrees with our version (τῇ βασιλίσσῃ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). Plainly a person is required, and such a one as was the object of female worship, and the fem. pronoun *to her* in ch. xliv. 17, 18, 19, 25, can be explained upon no other hypothesis.

22. This verse is put forward by many critics of the new school in proof that God absolutely commanded no sacrifices whatsoever by the hand of Moses. Assuming this as Jeremiah's meaning, they infer (1) that all such portions of the Pentateuch as give directions for sacrifices are forgeries of a later date: that (2) the book of Deuteronomy, in which there are no minute directions about sacrifices, and which otherwise has much in common with the writings of Jeremiah, was that prophet's own composition, and palmed off by him, acting in concert with Hilkiah and Shaphan, by a pious fraud upon the credulous Josiah: and that (3) it was only after the return from exile that the laws about the tabernacle, sacrifices, the great feasts, &c., were invented, and that Ezra was probably the person guilty of this deception (see Hitzig and Graf in loc., Bohlen, 'die Genesis,' Einl., p. 167, Reuss, 'Josias u. Josua,' in Ersch u. Grueber, 'Encycl.,' &c.). In answer to this assumption it would almost be sufficient to quote ch. xxxiii. 18, where Jeremiah says, "Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." But this is not the only place where the hereditary right of the Levitical priesthood, and the three kinds of sacrifices appointed by the Mosaic law, are acknowledged; for Jeremiah repeatedly makes allusions to them, see vi. 20, vii. 21, xiv. 12, xvii. 26, xxxiii. 21, 22. Even more full are the allusions made by the older prophets, Hosea and Amos, who, between them, establish the existence both in Israel and Judah of all the main particulars of the Mosaic law (see Dr Pusey's 'Minor Prophets,' Introduction to Hosea, p. 2, Amos, p. 152. See also Drechsler's 'Essay upon the unscientific Method of the new Critics,' Leipzig, 1837, pp. 104—111). Plainly, therefore, Jeremiah could not have meant that God gave no commandments concerning sacrifices when He brought the people out of Egypt: his meaning really is that sacrifices were not the object and purpose of the law, but obedience, as Samuel had taught long before (1 S. xv. 22). Add that the severe manner in which the prophets condemn sacrifice when offered for its own sake (see Isai. i. 11; Hos. vi. 6, viii. 11—13; Amos v. 21—27; Micah vi. 6—8), is a proof that the sacrificial system was a great and powerful institution: for otherwise men would not have trusted in it. Finally the words of Jeremiah do not properly convey the sense which these critics endeavour to put upon them. For in the Hebr. the phrase *concerning* (or as it is in the margin *concerning the matter of*) *burnt-offerings and sacrifices* is על דברי עולה וזבח, *i.e. as to matters of burnt-offering*, &c. Now this means *for the sake of*, and is so translated in Deut. iv. 21; and so in Jer. xiv. 1, where the A. V. has *concerning*, and in Ps. vii. tit., where it is translated literally, it means *because of*, or *with reference to*, the dearth, *with reference to* Cush. A similar phrase על דבר in 2 S. xviii. 5, in conjunction with the same verb which is used here, means "he gave charge or commandment *with reference to* Absalom." Cp. also Deut. xxii. 24, where it is rendered *because;* Eccles. iii. 18 *concerning the estate of*, where see note; and ib. viii. 2 *in regard of*. Evidently, therefore, Jeremiah's words mean, not that God did not then institute sacrifices, but that He did not institute them for their own sakes. "For I spake not unto your fathers nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt because of, *i.e.* for the sake of, burnt-offerings and sacrifices." In exact accordance with this Maimonides distinguishes between laws of primary importance enacted for their own sakes, and laws of secondary importance (cp. Ps. l. 7—15). The current exposition of the older commentators is best given by Kimchi, who points out that the decalogue, which was the basis of the whole law, and laid up in the ark as the bond of the covenant, contained no ritual ordinance except that of the sabbath. Similarly, Jerome and Abravanel notice that the ceremonial law was only introduced after the people, by the worship of the golden calf, had proved themselves unworthy of a spiritual dispensation. And this was the view prevalent in the early Church. Unable from the daily sight of heathen worship to see that sacrifices had a right side (see 'Ep. ad Diognetum,' c. 3), the early Christians classed them among τὰ ἐπείσακτα, the burden of the law laid upon the Jews for their carnality (see 'Constit. Apos.' passim,

Clem. Rom. 'Rec.' I. 36, &c.). Until the rise then of the new school commentators have all seen the true meaning of Jeremiah's words, namely, that God in instituting the ceremonial part of the Mosaic law did so, not *for the sake* of having burnt-offerings and sacrifices made unto Him, but for moral purposes. The explanation given by Henderson is also to the purpose, that it is not unfrequent in the Scriptures for a thing to be stated absolutely, which is true only relatively. Absolutely God did command sacrifices, but not such as they offered, nor as of final obligation. He notices also that the moral law was promulgated first, and with the utmost solemnity, upon Sinai; the ceremonial law only afterwards.

The reading of the Kri הוֹצִיאִי *my* bringing out, instead of הוֹצִיא *the* bringing out, is supported by so many MSS. and the omission of the י might so easily happen, that it is to be received as probable.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The calamity of the Jews, both dead and alive.* 4 *He upbraideth their foolish and shameless impenitency.* 13 *He sheweth their grievous judgment,* 18 *and bewaileth their desperate estate.*

AT that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves:

2 And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.

3 And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 ¶ Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?

CHAP. VIII. 1. *they shall bring out the bones*] Not the living only but the dead shall be exposed to the ruthless violence of the enemy, who will ransack the graves of all the wealthier classes, to plunder them of the insignia of their rank which it was usual to deposit in their tombs (see the story of Hyrcanus robbing the sepulchre of David in Josephus' 'Antiq.' VII. 15, and Darius that of Nitocris in Herod. I. 187, and Jerome's exposition of this place). On the Masoretic reading see Note at end of Chapter.

2. *And they shall spread them*] This does not refer to any formal act, but means that the bones tossed out of the tombs by the marauders shall lie exposed, some here, some there, under the open sky till they decay, instead of being carefully preserved in the chambers which rich men in Judæa so carefully hewed for themselves in the rocks.

whom they have loved] There is great force in the piled-up verbs by which their worship of the heavenly bodies is described. These gods whom they *loved* with their hearts, whom they *served* with costly offerings, after whom they *walked*, following and attending in their suite, whom they *sought*, frequenting their worship and trying to gain their favour, whom lastly they *worshipped*, bowing down before them and publicly honouring them; these gods thus served with heart and hand do nothing whatsoever for their worshippers, except to aid their bones in their decay. Hitzig well points out how the prophet beginning with the heart describes their worship in the various stages of its development, and then contrasts its fulness with the miserable reward which ensues.

3. *this evil family*] Tribes were divided into *families*, which again were sub-divided into *fathers' houses*. In this place, however, Jeremiah uses the word of the whole Jewish race. Cp. also its use in ch. xxv. 9 and iii. 14.

which remain] See Note at end of Chapter.

4. *Moreover...*] The prophet here resumes the main subject of his prophecy from ch. vii. 28. In the intervening verses he had set before the Jews the inevitable result which must follow upon their sins: he now again invites them to repentance in the hope that they will listen to his admonitions, and so escape from the retribution hanging over them.

Shall they fall...?] Or, *Shall* **men** *fall and not arise? Shall* **one** *turn away and not return?* Both clauses are impersonal, though the first is plu., and the second sing. Literally, this clause is *Shall one turn and not turn?* for which play upon words see note on ch. iii. 12. The argument is that when men fall, they do not lie upon the ground,

5 Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.

6 I hearkened and heard, *but* they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

7 Yea, [a] the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

[a] Isai. i. 3.

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but endeavour to get up again: and when a man loses his way, he does not persist in going on, but turns round, and retraces his steps. Israel then will be only following the dictates of common sense in desisting from that which she now knows to be her ruin. This verse which is very forcible is a great favourite with the fathers. Thus Basil (Ep. XLVI.) urges it as a motive for repentance: and Chrysostom argues from it that no sinner need despair of repentance.

5. *Why* then...] When thus all men, as soon as they know that they are in the wrong, endeavour to return to the right way, why is God's own people alone an exception?

slidden back...backsliding] The words are the same as those which in the preceding verse have been translated *turn* and *return*. To retain the force of the argument they should be rendered, *Why doth this people of Jerusalem turn away with a perpetual turning?* (see on ch. iii. 6). The word rendered *turn away* is really an adj., and means one given to turning, *a constant backslider*, and is fem. because *people of Jerusalem*, though in itself masc., is equivalent to the commoner phrase, *daughter of Jerusalem*. The A.V. is right in the rendering *perpetual*, but as the word is rare the versions were ignorant of its meaning. Thus the Vulg. translates it *contentious*, the LXX. *shameless*; but the Syr. gives the right sense, rendering it *earnest, thorough*.

deceit] *i.e.* idolatry, because men worship in it that which is false, and which also disappoints the worshippers.

they refuse] The word means to refuse from a feeling of dislike. In the Aramaic dialects it means to loathe, abominate.

6. *I hearkened and heard*] The sense is lost by supposing with Hitzig that the speaker is the prophet. Really it is God, who before passing sentence carefully listens to the words of the people. So in Gen. xi. 5 the equity of the divine judgments is shewn by the Almighty going down to see the tower.

not aright] *not-right, unright*, similarly used as a substantive in ch. xxiii. 10, xlviii. 30; Isai. xvi. 6, &c. In the Hebr. idiom *not-right* means that which is utterly wrong. See note on ch. ii. 8.

no man repented] Better, *repents*. It is a present participle: and so afterwards, every one *turns*. The original phrase is very striking. *No man has pity upon his own wickedness*. If men understood the true nature of sin, the sinner would repent out of very pity upon himself.

What have I done?] The thought expressed here is best explained by what St Paul says in 1 Cor. xi. 31.

every one turned] Or, **returns**. For a moment they listen to God's warnings, and then return to their sins. On *course*, see Note at end of Chapter.

as the horse rusheth] Lit. *overfloweth*, see Isai. viii. 8. It is a double metaphor; first, the determined persistence of the people in sin is compared to the blind fury which at the sound of the trumpet seizes upon the war-horse; and then its impetuous rush into the battle is likened to the overflowing of a torrent, which nothing can stop in its destructive course.

7. *Yea, the stork...*] The analogy here is a different one from that used in Isai. i. 3. The prophet there shews that the brute creation are influenced by kindness: Jeremiah here appeals to the obedience which migratory birds render to the law of their natures. The birds referred to are (1) the *stork*; it arrives in Palestine about March 21, and after a six weeks' halt departs for the north of Europe. Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' 246, notices the appropriateness of the expression *the stork in the heaven*, as, unlike other migratory birds, it takes its flight by day, at a vast height in the air. (2) The *turtle-dove*. Its appearance is with us also one of the pleasant signs of the approach of spring, cp. Song of Sol. ii. 12. See Tristram, p. 219. (3) The *crane*, *sûs*, really the **swift**. As Tristram, p. 205, has noticed, the swallow, by which the A. V. has rendered the next word, is not a regular migrant in Palestine, but the swift is. The Hebr. for *swallow* is *derôr*, Ps. lxxxiv. 3. The Masorites have changed *sûs* into *sîs*, apparently because *sûs* also means a horse; but they have neglected to make the corresponding change in Isai. xxxviii. 14. (4) The *swallow*, *'agûr*, really the **crane**. See Tristram, p. 239. The conjunction is omitted in Isaiah, and Hitzig and Graf would omit it here, arguing that the swift is called *sûs 'agûr*, "the twittering horse." But the reasons given are insufficient.

8 How do ye say, We *are* wise,
and the law of the LORD *is* with us?
‖ Or, *the false pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood.* Lo, certainly ‖ in vain made he *it;*
the pen of the scribes *is* in vain.

9 [b] ‖ The wise *men* are ashamed,
they are dismayed and taken: lo,
they have rejected the word of the
LORD; and † what wisdom *is* in them?

10 Therefore will I give their
wives unto others, *and* their fields to
them that shall inherit *them:* for
every one from the least even unto
the greatest is given to [c] covetousness,
from the prophet even unto the priest
every one dealeth falsely.

11 For they have [d] healed the hurt
of the daughter of my people slightly,
saying, [e] Peace, peace; when *there is*
no peace.

12 Were they [f] ashamed when they
had committed abomination? nay, they
were not at all ashamed, neither could
they blush: therefore shall they fall
among them that fall: in the time of
their visitation they shall be cast down,
saith the LORD.

13 ¶ ‖ I will surely consume them,
saith the LORD: *there shall be* no
grapes [g] on the vine, nor figs on the
[h] fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and
the things that I have given them
shall pass away from them.

‖ Or, *Have they been ashamed, &c.*
† Heb. *the wisdom of what thing.*
[b] chap. 6. 15.
[c] Isai. 56. 11. chap. 6. 13.
[d] chap. 6. 14.
[e] Ezek. 13. 10.
[f] chap. 3. 3. & 6. 15.
‖ Or, *In gathering I will consume.*
[g] Isai. 5. 1, &c.
[h] Matth. 21. 19. Luke 13. 6, &c.

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the judgment] The word *mishpât* signifies "anything ordained of God," and is thus equally applicable to the instinct which migratory birds obey, and to those ordinances which God has given for human guidance.

8. *the law of the* LORD *is with us*] The *torah*, or written law, in opposition to *mishpât*, which includes natural law. It was the possession of this inspired law which made the priests and prophets so boastfully exclaim, *We are wise*, where the word also signifies *learned men*, men whose wisdom is not the result of natural acuteness, but is obtained from books. Many even think that a special class of learned men was meant here, and in ch. xviii. 18, and elsewhere. For their arguments, see Nägelsb.

Lo, certainly...] Rather, **Verily, lo! the lying** *pen of the scribes* **hath made it**—the law—**into a lie.** This is the simplest rendering, as it merely supplies *torah*, the law, from the preceding clause. The A. V. follows Kimchi in making the Hebr. words *for* or *into a lie* mean *in vain*. But even then the translation must be *the lying pen of the scribes hath laboured in vain*. Cp. the rendering in the marg. On the scribes, see Note at end of Chapter, and that on 2 Chro. xxxiv. 13.

9. *they have rejected the word of the* LORD] *i.e.* they have interpreted the law in a manner contrary to its real principles. It became in the hands of the Soferim or scribes a mere code of ceremonial observance (Mark vii. 13). "The word of the Lord" is used especially of that spoken by the prophets.

10—12. These verses are almost identical with ch. vi. 12—15. The LXX. omit them, but the many minute differences besides those required by the grammar shew that they are not, as Hitzig thought, an interpolation. It is not unusual for Jeremiah to quote himself.

10. *to them that shall inherit* them] Rather, **to those that shall take possession of them,** *i.e.* to conquerors who shall take them by force. To inherit is to obtain property legally, but the verb used here is that applied to Ahab's seizure of Naboth's vineyard (1 K. xxi. 15); to the subjugation of Palestine by the Israelites (Lev. xx. 24); to the Babylonian conquests (Isai. xiv. 21), &c. See also Micah i. 15, and note on Jer. xlix. 2. We must further observe that as the Jews in their disobedience violated God's *mishpât, ordinance*, so in their punishment the most cherished ordinances of social life, marriage and property, were violated.

13. *I will surely consume...*] The verse is difficult, but the right translation is:—**I will gather and sweep them away, saith Jehovah: there are** *no grapes on the vine*, **and no** *figs on the fig-tree, and the leaf* **is dry; therefore will I appoint those that shall pass over them.** In the opening clause Jeremiah, in his fondness for alliteration, brings two verbs together, of which the first, which literally is an infinitive meaning *to gather*, only intensifies the second, the sense being, *I will sweep them all away together*. The intermediate clauses describe the present state of the Jews, and not as in the A.V. the result of God's judgment. Judah is a vine which bears no fruit: a tree which makes even no profession of life, for her leaf is dry. The last words are disputed. The ancient versions render them, *What I have given them they have transgressed*, and so Ewald. The A. V. understands it of their losing God's gifts. Venema, Umbreit, &c., explain it in the sense in which the verb is used in Isai. viii. 8, of an army sweeping over the land like a flood. This seems best: the absence of אֲשֶׁר, *those that*, is no objection. See Ewald, 'Gr.' 333 *b*, Ges. 123, 3 *a*.

14 Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath
[i] chap. 9. 15. & 23. 15. [‖] Or, *poison.* put us to silence, and given us [i] water of [‖] gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

15 We [k] looked for peace, but no good *came;* *and* for a time of health, and behold trouble!
[k] chap. 14. 19.

16 The snorting of his horses was heard from [l] Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land,
[l] chap. 4. 15.
[†] Heb. *the fulness thereof.* and [†] all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which *will* not *be* [m] charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.
[m] Psal. 58. 4, 5.

18 ¶ *When* I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart *is* faint [†] in me.
[†] Heb. *upon.*

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people [†] because of them that dwell in a far country: *Is* not the LORD in Zion? *is* not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, *and* with strange vanities?
[†] Heb. *because of the country of them that are far off.*

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

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14. *Why do we sit still?*] In the last verse God had declared that He would give up the land to be the prey of an invading army. Jeremiah now introduces the people as rousing one another to exertion. Why, they ask, do we remain here to be overwhelmed? They are ready now to follow the command given by the prophet in ch. iv. 5, but with the conviction that all hope is over.

let us be silent there] Rather, **let us perish there**, lit. *be put to silence.* Comp. ch. xxv. 37, xlix. 26, l. 30, li. 6. In the following clause the verb is in a still stronger conjugation, and means *for Jehovah our God hath decreed our destruction.*

water of gall] *i.e.* poison. The word rendered *gall* is the name of a plant, for which see Deut. xxix. 18. The words however ib. xxxii. 32, *their grapes are grapes of gall*, are fatal to the idea that the plant was the poppy. Probably it was the belladonna, or night-shade, to the *berries* of which the grapes of Israel were compared.

15. *for a time of health, and behold trouble*] Or, *for a time of rest, and behold* **terror.** The Masorites by their correction probably meant to approve of the rendering *health*, but the other sense, of relaxation, is equally probable (see Eccles. x. 4, &c.).

16. *from Dan*] *i.e.* the northern boundary of the land, see on ch. iv. 15. The fathers, however, explain the passage mystically of the fall of Judæa being caused by idolatry, of which one of the chief seats had been Dan (Iren. 'Adv. Hær.' v. 30). As antichrist by analogy must arise from the same place, they thus accounted for the omission of the name of Dan in Rev. vii. 5—8.

his strong ones] *i.e. his chargers, warhorses*, see ch. xlvii. 3, l. 11, and note on Deut. xvii. 16.

17. *For, behold, I will send*] Or, **am sending.** No prophet changes his metaphors so suddenly as Jeremiah. The invading army, sent to execute God's sentence, is now compared to snakes, whom no charming can soothe, and whose bite is fatal. The metaphor is taken from the narrative in Num. xxi. 5, 6.

serpents, cockatrices] The words are in apposition, *serpents, even* **vipers.** See Isai. xi. 8, and Tristram, 'N. H. of B.' p. 275. It has not failed to be noticed that Dan in Gen. xlix. 17 is compared to a serpent, *shefifon*, which may either be the horned snake, *cerastes*, or an antiquated form of the name *tsifoni* given to the large yellow viper here.

18. When *I would comfort ...*] Rather, **O my comfort in** *sorrow: my heart* **faints for me** (Isai. i. 5). The word translated *comfort* is not found anywhere else, and is by some supposed to be corrupt. With these mournful ejaculations a new strophe begins, ending with ch. ix. 1, in which the prophet mourns over the miserable fate of those who, however great their sins, were nevertheless his countrymen, among whom he had been earnestly labouring, but all in vain.

19. *Behold the voice...*] This verse should be translated thus:—*Behold the voice of the cry* **for help** *of the daughter of my people* **from a distant land:** "*Is not Jehovah in Sion? Is not her king* **there?**" "*Why have they provoked me to anger with their* **carved** *images, with* **foreign** *vanities?*" The invaders have not merely wasted the land but carried the remnant into captivity. The prophet seems to hear their loud cry for help; but their complaint, *Is there no Jehovah in Zion?* is met by God demanding of them the reason why instead of worshipping Him they have set up idols.

21 For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.

22 *Is there* no [n] balm in Gilead; *is there* no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people [†] recovered?

[n] chap. 46. 11.

[†] Heb. *gone up?*

20. *The harvest...*] These again are the words of the people, whose despair at being thus rejected by God takes the form of a proverb.

the summer] Rather, **the fruit-gathering**, which follows the corn-harvest. As then the husbandman when the corn has failed hopes that there may still be a good vintage, and plenty of olives and figs, and gives way to despair only when the fruit-gathering has also proved unproductive; so despair seized the people when they saw opportunities for their deliverance again and again pass by, till God seemed utterly to have forgotten them.

21. *For the hurt...*] Lit. *Because of the breaking of the daughter of my people I am broken.* The words of the prophet, whose heart is crushed by the sad cry of his countrymen.

I am black] Or, **I go mourning.** Ps. xxxviii. 6, but see note on Job xxx. 28.

22. *balm*] See note on Gen. xxxvii. 25; its healing virtues are praised by Jeremiah also in ch. xlvi. 11, li. 8.

is there *no physician there?*] *i.e.* in Gilead. Naturally where the balsam was found, there would also be people skilled in the application of it. The objection of those who would understand by *there* the place where Israel was in captivity arises from a total misunderstanding of the passage. The prophet's meaning is, balm used to grow in Israel for the healing of the nations. Her priests and prophets were the physicians, whose office it was to teach the remedy for human sin and woe. Has Israel then no balm for herself? Is there no physician in her who can bind up her wound? Gilead was to Israel what Israel spiritually was to the whole world.

why then is not the health...recovered?] Better, *why then has no bandage*, or plaister of balsam, *been laid upon my people?* Fürst, however, and Nägelsb., support *healing*, the rendering of the A.V.

NOTES on CHAP. VIII. 1, 3, 6, 8.

1. The ו before יוציהו rejected by the Masorites as not having the power of a conjunction, must be retained as being one of a numerous class of instances of a similar use in Scripture. See Elias Levita's 'Massoreth ha-Mas.' ed. Ginsburg, p. 117, Ewald 'Gr.' § 613.

3. The words *which remain in all the places* are literally *in all the places which remain*, and Henderson follows St Jerome in so translating them. But the word for *places* is fem., and *which remain* is masc., and though this is not conclusive (cp. 2 S. xvii. 9; 2 Chro. xxxiii. 19), yet it is an objection. But as the verb rendered *I have driven* properly signifies *I have thrust out*, plainly the prophet was not thinking of places in Judæa, but of foreign lands, and thus the sense admits only of the translation in the A.V. In this too there are grammatical difficulties, and the LXX. and Syr. are probably right in omitting the word הנשארים *which remain*, the insertion of which is probably due to some copyist, whose eye was misled by its occurrence again in the preceding line.

6. The C'tib has במרצותם, which the Masorites have changed into the sing. probably because the word is sing. in the parallel place in ch. xxiii. 10. But the plural is required here. The Hebr. literally is *The whole of it* —of the people—*hath returned to their courses*, some to one, some to another, according to each one's besetting sin. No weight can be attached to the ancient versions in such a case, as they systematically neglect numbers and genders.

8. The mention of *scribes* in this place is a crucial point in the argument whether or not the Pentateuch or Torah is the old law-book of the Jews, or a fabrication which gradually grew up, but was not received as authoritative until after the return from captivity. As stated in the note on 2 Chro. xxxiv. 13, it is not until the time of Josiah that we find scribes mentioned except as political officers; here they are students of the Torah. But the Torah must have existed in writing before there could have been an order of men whose special business it was to study it; and therefore Ewald, Hitzig, Graf and others explain the verse away by saying that perhaps the scribes were writers of books who had published collections of false prophecies written in imitation of the true. But the Torah of Jehovah is mentioned in this very verse, and the whole gist of the passage is lost if what the scribes turned into a lie was anything else except that law, of which they had just boasted that they were the possessors. Moreover, the scribes undeniably became possessed of preponderating influence during the exile: and on the return

from Babylon were powerful enough to prevent the restoration of the kingly office. Naturally therefore we look for some indications of their existence before the downfal of Jerusalem. Now here and in 2 Chro. xxxiv. 13 we find enumerated along with the priests and Levites men who devoted themselves to the study of the written law, and who in the time of Josiah had acquired such influence as to be recognized as a distinct class. And this is just what we should expect from the rapid progress of learning, which began with Elisha's active management of the schools of the prophets, and culminated in the days of Hezekiah. At first one here and one there among the Levites applied themselves to the special study of the law of Moses, but gradually they grew in numbers and importance, and finally were organized, probably by some leading man like Shaphan, and became henceforward a leading class in the Jewish state. Jeremiah's whole argument depends upon the fact that there were in his days men who claimed to be *wise* or rather *learned* men, because of their study of the Pentateuch, and is entirely inconsistent with the assumptions of the new critics, that Jeremiah wrote the book of Deuteronomy, and that Ezra wrote parts of Exodus and the whole of Leviticus.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Jeremiah lamenteth the Jews for their manifold sins,* 9 *and for their judgment.* 12 *Disobedience is the cause of their bitter calamity.* 17 *He exhorteth to mourn for their destruction,* 23 *and to trust not in themselves, but in God.* 25 *He threateneth both Jews and Gentiles.*

† Heb. *Who will give my head, &c.*
[a] Isai. 22. 4. chap. 4. 19.

OH †[a] that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they *be* all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

3 And they bend their tongues *like* their bow *for* lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the

CHAP. IX. 1. *Oh that my head...*] This verse belongs to the preceding chapter, with which it is joined in the Hebrew. But any break here at all interrupts the meaning, as from the wish to be utterly dissolved in tears because of the misfortunes of his countrymen, the prophet passes naturally to the wish to flee away from the daily sight of those sins, which were the real cause of their sufferings.

a fountain of tears] Rather, *a reservoir*, in which tears had been stored up, so that the prophet might weep abundantly. See ch. ii. 13, and Note at end of Chapter.

2—9. From their punishment the prophet now turns to their sins. An utter want of all honesty and upright dealing between man and man exists among them (2—6), and therefore God will bring upon them chastisement fierce as the refiner's fire (7—9).

2. *Oh that I had...*] The prophet, convinced that all his labours to arrest the nation in its downward course are in vain, utters the wish that he might be spared his daily striving, and in some lone wilderness give way to his sorrow, without restraint.

a lodging place] It was usual to build in the desert, either by private charity or at the public expense, hospices or caravanserais, to receive travellers for a single night, who had however to bring their own supplies with them. See on Gen. xlii. 27; Exod. iv. 24; Jer. xli. 17.

adulterers] See ch. ii. 20, iii. 8, 9.

an assembly] Or, **a gang.**

treacherous men] See ch. v. 11. It refers here to men who are faithless towards one another.

3. *And they bend their tongues* like *their bow* for *lies*] Rather, *And they bend their* **tongue** (sing.) **to be their bow of lies,** *i. e.* just as men before a battle get their bows ready, so they of set purpose make ready to do mischief, only their arrows are lying words. The Masorites, offended apparently at the tongue being compared to a bow, have altered the reading to *they cause their tongue to tread the bow of deceit.* To tread, rendered *bend* above, means to string, the bow being held firmly by one foot while the string is pushed up to the notch. The Assyrians held it with the knee; see 'Anc. Mon.' i. 450.

but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth] Rather, **neither do they rule faithfully in the land.** It is much to be regretted that the translation *to be valiant for the truth* is untenable, but the verb in Hebr. means *to be mighty, possessed of power. Faithfully*, lit. *for faithfulness*, or fidelity in their engagements with their fellow-men. *Land, i.e.* Judæa. The A.V. seldom makes any attempt to distinguish between the three meanings *earth, land* and *ground*, all represented by the one Hebrew term *eretz*, and hence constant confusion.

earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.

4 [b]Take ye heed every one of his ‖neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.

5 And they will ‖deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, *and* weary themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thine habitation *is* in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

7 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

8 Their tongue *is as* an arrow shot out; it speaketh [c]deceit: *one* speaketh [d]peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but †in heart he layeth ‖his wait.

9 ¶ [e]Shall I not visit them for these *things?* saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the ‖habitations of the wilderness a

[b] chap. 12. 6. Micah 7. 5, 6.
‖ Or, *friend.*
‖ Or, *mock.*
[c] Psal. 12. 2. & 120. 3.
[d] Psal. 28, 3.
† Heb. *in the midst of him.*
‖ Or, *wait for him.*
[e] chap. 5. 9, 29.
‖ Or, *pastures.*

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4. *Take ye heed...*] In a state of such utter lawlessness, when men are rejecting God, and proceeding from evil to evil, *i.e.* from one sin to another, the bonds of mutual confidence are necessarily relaxed, and suspicion takes its place. The parallel passage in Micah vii. 5, 6, shews that Jeremiah's complaint was not occasioned by his soreness at personal ill-treatment, but was too true a picture of the general faithlessness which existed at Jerusalem. Comp. Stanley, 'Lect.' II. 516.

every brother will utterly supplant] An allusion to the name of Jacob, Gen. xxv. 26, xxvii. 36; Hos. xii. 3. It might be rendered, *every brother is a thorough Jacob.*

every neighbour will walk with slanders] Or, **slandereth.** See note on vi. 28. The present tense would better give the prophet's meaning throughout.

5. *they will deceive*] This is to be preferred to the margin *mock*, taken from 1 K. xviii. 27.

and *weary themselves to commit iniquity*] They take the utmost pains *to go crookedly*, see note on ch. iii. 21.

6. *Thine habitation* is *in the midst of deceit*] According to some this is addressed by God to the prophet. Rather, it is a continuation of the warning given in *v.* 4. *Trust no one: for thou dwellest surrounded by deceit on every side.* And upon this naturally follows the admonition addressed to them in Jehovah's name, that their rejection of God is the result of their want of honesty in their dealings with one another (1 John iv. 20). The translation of the LXX. arises from their having divided the consonants differently, and though adopted by Ewald is not so good as the text represented by the A. V.

7. *I will melt them, and try them*] Upon sin so general as has been described above punishment necessarily follows, but this punishment is corrective rather than retributive. The terms used are those of the refiner of metals, the first being the smelting to separate the pure metal from the ore: the second the testing to see whether the metal is pure, or still mixed with alloy. As milder means have failed, God will now put the nation into the more powerful crucible of tribulation, that whatever is evil being consumed in the fire, all there is in them of good may be purified.

for how shall I do...] Rather, *for how* **else could I act with reference to** *the daughter of my people?* In what other way could I deal with her?

8. *Their tongue* is as *an arrow shot out*] Rather, *is a murderous arrow.* The A. V. has adopted the reading of the Masorites, but the written text is supported by the LXX. and Vulg., and is altogether preferable.

in heart he layeth his wait] Rather, **inwardly** *he layeth his* **ambush**, or possibly *his trap*, the root-meaning being *to interweave.* This verse is repeated from ch. v. 9, 29.

10—22. The punishment described in general terms in the preceding three verses is now detailed at great length. It is to consist (1) in the desolation of the land, and the scattering of the people, 10—16; and (2) in the terrific slaughter of large numbers of the citizens, 17—22.

10. *For the mountains*] This may also be translated *upon*, but *for* is better. Jeremiah first laments for the pasture-lands, lately occupied by countless herds, but now desolate; and then for the city, so utterly empty as to be the abode of jackals. Compare ch. x. 22.

the habitations] *i.e.* the temporary encampments of the shepherds, see Note on ch. vi. 2.

lamentation, because they are [1] burned up, so that none can pass through *them*; neither can *men* hear the voice of the cattle; [2] both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, *and* [f] a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah [2] desolate, without an inhabitant.

12 ¶ Who *is* the wise man, that may understand this? and *who is he* to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth *and* is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

14 But have walked after the [1] imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them:

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, *even* this people, [g] with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

16 I will [h] scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

17 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of

[1] Or, *desolate.*
[2] Heb. *from the fowl even to, &c.*
[f] chap. 10. 22.
[2] Heb. *desolation.*
[1] Or, *stubbornness.*
[g] chap. 8. 14. & 23. 15.
[h] Lev. 26. 33.

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so that none can...] The word *can* is not in the Hebr., which should be translated, **They are parched up, with no man to** *pass through them;* **neither do they** *hear the voice* **of cattle; from the birds of the heaven even to the beasts they** *are fled, they are gone.* The pastures of the wilderness, usually tenanted with life, are so utterly waste, that even birds cannot find subsistence there.

11. *I will make...*] Jehovah now in person declares the highest measure of the impending desolation. Jerusalem, the joyous city, is to become a heap of ruins, the den, not of *dragons*, but of **jackals**.

12. *for what the land perisheth...*] This is the question proposed for consideration, and it would be better to arrange it separately. For *he to whom the mouth of Jehovah has spoken* is the equivalent of the wise man in the first clause. The prophet calls then upon the wise man to explain his question, and upon the man taught of God to declare it; and then puts the question itself, **Wherefore did the land perish?** And upon this follows the assertion of the fact; *It is parched like the wilderness with no man to pass through.*

13. Jehovah, that no man may plead ignorance of the cause of the chastisement about to fall upon Jerusalem, emphatically declares that it was their desertion of the divine law. The fathers lay great stress upon the words *which I set before them*, lit. *before their faces.* The law was not given secretly, says Chrysostom, but publicly, with all the pomp and terrors of Sinai; and so Theodoret and others.

neither walked therein] *i.e.* in the law, as the pronoun in the Hebr. shews.

14. *imagination*] Or, **stubbornness**, see iii. 17.

For *Baalim*, see ii. 8, 23.

which their fathers taught them] It was not the sin of one generation that brought upon them so heavy a chastisement: it was an hereditary sin, which had been handed down from father to son. Upon the duties of fathers to their children, see Deut. iv. 9.

15. *I will feed them...*] Rather, **I am feeding them.** The present participle used here, followed by three verbs in the future, shews that the judgment has begun, of which the successive stages are given in the next clause.

wormwood] See note on Deut. xxix. 18, and for *water of gall*, note on ch. viii. 14.

16. *I will scatter them also among the heathen*] This verse is taken from Lev. xxvi. 33, and the fulfilment of what had been so long before appointed as the determinate penalty for the violation of Jehovah's covenant is one of the most remarkable facts in proof that prophecy was something more than human foresight.

whom neither they...known] This clause is added by Jeremiah, and intensifies Judah's punishment. Among strangers everything would seem unnatural, and mutual antipathies easily arise.

till I have consumed them] See note on ch. iv. 27. But how is this consumption consistent with the promise to the contrary there given? Plainly because it is limited by the terms declared in *v.* 7. Previously therefore to Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem God removed to a place of safety those in whom the nation should revive.

hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come:

18 And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.

19 For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast *us* out.

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation.

21 For death is come up into our windows, *and* is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, *and* the young men from the streets.

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcases of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather *them*.

23 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom,

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17. *the mourning women*] *i.e.* those whose business it was to attend at funerals, and by their skilled wailings aid the real mourners in giving vent to their grief. Hence they are called *cunning women*, lit. *wise* women, wisdom being constantly used in Scripture for anything in which people are trained, see ch. x. 9. See also for these women Eccles. xii. 5; Amos v. 16. Hired mourners are still employed in Egypt, Lane, 'Modern Egyptians,' II. 252; Lepsius, 'Letters,' p. 183, ed. Bohn.

18. *take up a wailing for us*] *i.e.* for the nation once God's chosen people, but long spiritually dead, and whose national obsequies must now be performed prior to their removal for burial to a foreign land.

19. *because we have forsaken the land*] Or, left. *Forsaken* seems to imply voluntary action, whereas they had been forced to abandon it.

because our dwellings have cast us *out*] Rather, *because they* **have cast down** *our dwellings*. The *us* was probably inserted in the A. V. from the influence of passages such as Lev. xx. 22. The whole verse is a description of their sufferings. The enemy has spoiled them of their goods so utterly that their condition is one of shame and confusion. Stripped of everything they are driven into exile, and their houses are destroyed. See 2 K. xxv. 9.

20. *Yet hear*...] Rather, **For** *hear*. The command is addressed to the women because it was more especially their part to express the general feelings of the nation. See 1 S. xviii. 6; 2 S. i. 24. While then the men mount upon the walls, and offer the last unavailing resistance to the besieger, the women utter the death-wail over the perishing nation. They are to teach their daughters and neighbours the *lamentation*, *i.e.* *dirge*, because the harvest of death would be so large that the number of trained women would not suffice. It is remarkable that while the women are addressed, the pronouns *your* ear, *your* daughters, are masculine. Though instances of this peculiarity are found elsewhere, yet it suggests that the women are spoken of, not in their own proper characters, but as types of the nation.

21. *death is come up into our windows*] *i.e.* death steals silently like a thief upon his victims, of whom more perish in a siege by hunger and sickness, than by the sword, Ezek. v, 12.

from without] *i.e.* death makes such havoc that there are no children left to go without, nor young men to frequent the open spaces in the city. The ancient but fanciful interpretation, all but universally given to this verse, is that the windows are the five senses, by which pleasure enters the mind, and with it sin and death.

22. *Speak, Thus saith the* LORD] There is much force in this sharp parenthetic interruption, which gives the following prediction, in itself so incredible, direct divine confirmation. It is not therefore to be rejected as a gloss.

as the handful...gather them] The handful means the little bundle of corn which the reaper gathers on his arm with three or four strokes of his sickle, and then lays down. Behind the reaper came one whose business it was to gather several of these bundles, and bind them into a sheaf. Thus death strews the ground with corpses as thickly as these handfuls lie upon the reaped land, but the corpses lie there unheeded.

23. *Let not the wise* man] With the preceding verse the prophet ended his description of the fall of Jerusalem, and now to the end of ch. x. he urges upon the people the practical conclusion to be drawn from God's righteous dealings with them. With the temple in ashes the empty hope perished of

neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches:

[f] 1 Cor. 1. 31. [g] 2 Cor. 10. 17.

24 But [g] let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

25 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will [†] punish all *them which are* circumcised with the uncircumcised;

[†] Heb. *visit upon.*

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are* [†] in the [k] utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all *these* nations *are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* [l] uncircumcised in the heart.

[†] Heb. *cut off into corners,* or, *having the corners* of their hair *polled.* [k] chap. 25. 23. [l] Rom. 2. 28, 29.

ch. vii. 4. With the Mosaic ritual swept away there was no room for the wisdom condemned in ch. viii. 9. Equally the three things on which men most pride themselves are shewn in this verse to have proved vain. Their wisdom and statesmanship have not saved them from hostile attack: their might and bravery have not repelled the onslaught of the invader: with the capture of the city their wealth has been given up to plunder. To men in such a strait God alone remains.

24. *let him that glorieth...*] This then is the prophet's remedy for the healing of the nation. It is the true understanding and knowledge of God, of which the first means the spiritual enlightenment of the mind (1 Cor. ii. 13, 14), the other the training of the heart unto obedience (John viii. 31, 32). This knowledge of God is further said to find in Him three chief attributes, (1) *lovingkindness, i.e.* readiness to shew grace and mercy; (2) *judgment*, a belief in which is declared in Heb. xi. 6 to be essential to faith; (3) *righteousness*, which is essential to religion absolutely. Unless men believe that God's dealings with them in life and death are right and just, they can neither love nor reverence Him.

25. *all* them which are *circumcised with the uncircumcised*] Rather, **all circumcised in uncircumcision**, *i.e.* all who though outwardly circumcised have no corresponding inward purity. The other possible translation *all circumcised in the foreskin* would oblige us to believe that all the nations mentioned practised circumcision. This, though asserted by Jerome, is at least doubtful. In Egypt only princes and priests probably were circumcised (Herod. II. 36, 104; see also Essay on Egyptian Words, Vol. I. p. 480): upon the Edomites it was forced by Hyrcanus (Josephus, 'Antiq.' XI. 9. 1, XV. 7. 9); and though some of the Arabs may have retained the rite from Ishmael, its more general adoption was probably borrowed from the Jews. The Koran, however, nowhere enjoins it, and many indications exist that before the time of Mohammed they were as a rule uncircumcised. See Chwolson, 'Die SSab.' II. 144, 'Zeitschrift d. D. M. Gesellsch.' III. 230, and Michaelis, 'Mos. Recht,' § 184.

26. *Egypt*, &c.] These nations are all included in ch. XXV. in the list of the future subjects of Nebuchadnezzar.

all that are *in the utmost corners*] Really, **all who have the corners of their hair shorn.** The people meant are those Arabs, who cut the hair close upon the forehead and temples but let it grow long behind, Herod. III. 8; Niebuhr, 'Travels in Arabia,' p. 59. The Israelites were forbidden to imitate this custom, Lev. xix. 27.

for all these *nations* are *uncircumcised*] Or, *for all* **the heathen** *are uncircumcised.* The rendering of the A. V. asserts that circumcision was not practised by any of these nations, whereas all we can affirm is, that, excepting a small class in Egypt, there is no proof of the general prevalence of circumcision among them. It probably prevailed partially in the heathen mysteries as a sign of peculiar sanctity (Jablonsky, 'Panth. Aeg. Proleg.' XIV., Keil, 'Bibl. Archäol.' I. 307), but to the Jews alone it represented their covenant relation to God.

NOTE on CHAP. IX. 1.

The word *makor* is so generally rendered "a fountain," that one or two words in correction may seem required. Coming from a root which signifies *to dig* (2 K. xix. 24), it plainly cannot mean a natural spring. The sense however of a pit or tank dug in the ground for the storing of water suits all the places in which the word occurs in Scripture, a large number of which are metaphorical, and in these also *reservoir* gives the right sense. It would be impossible to quote all the places even where it occurs in its natural sense, but a few may suffice where the rendering "fountain" is at once seen to be wrong. In Prov. xxv. 26 the wicked are compared to a troubled fountain, lit. a fountain rendered

dirty by the trampling of animals, and also to a *makor mashkhath*, rendered by the A. V. *a corrupt spring*, which are words without a meaning. A spring may have its waters charged with medicinal or noxious qualities, but corruption is possible only in stagnant water. In both cases the wicked man is compared to something spoilt. So in Jer. li. 36 we read *I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry*. The word is sing., *makor*. Now there are no springs in the flat alluvial soil of Babylonia, but by *her sea* is meant the vast lake dug by Nitocris for the reception of the waters of the Euphrates (Herod. i. 185), and *her makor* means the whole system of canals and reservoirs for the storing of the water. The straits to which commentators are driven by supposing *makor* to be a fountain, may be seen in Keil, who explains the *makor* of the Euphrates. So in Zech. xiii. 1 the *makor opened* is no natural spring. Such an idea spoils the whole metaphor. The analogy with the piercing of our Lord's side, and the waters of baptism, requires that the *makor* should be an artificial pool, into which sinners may descend and wash away their uncleanness. So frequently we read of a *makor of living waters*, Jer. ii. 13, xvii. 13, a phrase unmeaning if it were a fountain—for what fountain is a fountain of dead waters? —but full of meaning, if it be a pool or tank. In digging in a country like Palestine they would often come upon springs, or would put up dams to retain the waters of the brooks. Jeremiah thus compares the Deity to a vast reservoir, fed by perennial springs and ever-flowing rivers: always therefore full: but whom the people desert for little cisterns, which are full at the rainy season, when they are not wanted, but dry when the time of need comes. In the cognate dialects a *makor* is expressly said both by Bar-Ali and Bar-Bahlul to be a reservoir for storing up either rain-water, or that of springs.

CHAPTER X.

1 *The unequal comparison of God and idols.* 17 *The prophet exhorteth to flee from the calamity to come.* 19 *He lamenteth the spoil of the tabernacle by foolish pastors.* 23 *He maketh an humble supplication.*

HEAR ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel:

2 Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

3 For the † customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.

† Heb. *statutes*, or, *ordinances are vanity.*

4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

5 They *are* upright as the palm

CHAP. X. 1. *Hear ye the word*] See Note at end of Chapter.

2. *be not dismayed at the signs of heaven*] The verb shews that the signs referred to are not the planets, nor the greater constellations, but extraordinary appearances, such as eclipses, comets, meteors, and the like, which seemed to the heathen to portend national calamities. To attribute any importance to such things is to walk in heathen ways.

3. *For the customs of the people* are *vain*] Better with the marg., *the ordinances*, established institutions, *of the* **peoples**, *i.e.* heathen nations.

for one *cutteth*] Many MSS. read *they cut*, but the received punctuation (the difference being only in the vowels) is more emphatic. Literally it means *for a tree of the wood he cutteth it*, *i.e.* any one, it matters not who, in a matter so contemptible as an idol.

4. *They deck it*] When the image had been fashioned but of the wood it was covered with plates of gold and silver, and then fastened with nails in its place, that it might not *move*, *i.e.* totter and tumble down.

The agreement in this and the following verses with the argument in Isai. xl.—xliv. is so manifest, that no one can doubt that the one is modelled upon the other. If, then, Jeremiah took the thoughts and phrases from Isaiah, it is plain that the last twenty-seven chapters were prior in date to Jeremiah's time, and were not therefore written at the close of the Babylonian exile. This passage then is a crucial one to the pseudo-Isaiah theory. Two answers are attempted, (1) that the pseudo-Isaiah borrowed from Jeremiah. But this is refuted by the style, which is not that usual with Jeremiah. His mind ever given to lean upon others has evidently been strongly influenced in this section, in which, after the manner of St Paul, he has enlarged upon a subsidiary thought to the abeyance for the time of the leading idea. (2) That it is an interpolation in Jeremiah. But how then are we to account for its being found in the Septuagint version?

5. *They* are *upright as the palm tree*] Rather, *They are like a palm tree of turned work*, *i.e.* like one of those stiff inelegant pillars, something like a palm tree, which may be seen in oriental architecture, and to which

tree, [a] but speak not: they must needs be [b] borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for [c] they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

6 Forasmuch as *there is* none [d] like unto thee, O LORD; thou *art* great, and thy name *is* great in might.

7 [e] Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for [†] to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise *men* of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, *there is* none like unto thee.

8 But they are [†] altogether [f] brutish and foolish: the stock *is* a doctrine of vanities.

9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple *is* their clothing: they *are* all the work of cunning *men*.

10 But the LORD *is* the [†] true

[a] Psal. 115. 5. [b] Isai. 46. 1, 7. [c] Isai. 41. 23.

[d] Psal. 86. 8, 10.

[e] Rev. 15. 4.

[†] Or, *it liketh thee.*

[†] Heb. *in one*, or, *at once.* [f] Isai. 41. 29. Hab. 2. 18. Zech. 10. 2.

[†] Heb. *God of truth.*

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with their arms and hands close to their sides, and their legs and feet mere unshaped blocks, they might well be compared. As however the Hebr. word for *palm tree* (Judg. iv. 5) means a *pillar* in Song of Sol. iii. 6; Joel ii. 30; and that for *turned work* (Exod. xxv. 18, 31, &c.) is rendered *a garden of cucumbers* in Isai. i. 8, many commentators translate thus; *They are like pillars in a garden of cucumbers, i.e.* like the blocks set up to frighten away the birds. The chief argument for this rendering is, that the Jews themselves so understood it at the time when the apocryphal letter of Jeremiah was written. For in *v.* 70 they have imitated it thus, *As a scarecrow in a garden of cucumbers.* As none of the ancient versions support this rendering the former is to be preferred.

This comparison is peculiar to Jeremiah: for the rest he returns to Isaiah, see ch. xlvi. 7, xli. 23.

6. *Forasmuch as*] These words do not exist in the Hebrew, which should be rendered, **No one is** *like unto thee, O Jehovah. No one* is in the Hebr. a double negative, thus intensifying the denial. In this and the five following verses, 6—11, the prophet contrasts God's greatness with the impotence of idols.

in might] Heb. *geburah.* Compare the *el gibbor, mighty God,* of Isai. ix. 6.

7. *O King of nations*] *i.e.* heathen nations. Jehovah is not the national God of the Jews only, but reigns over all mankind, Ps. xxii. 28.

to thee doth it appertain] The versions endeavour in various ways to supply the idea which the prophet has left unexpressed. Best that of the Targum, *Thine is the Kingdom.* But the prophet's silence is even more eloquent; for everything appertaineth to God.

among all the wise men] Omit *men.* The prophet's term includes all who lay claim to wisdom, not men only but the gods, the givers of heathen oracles, and the personification of man's highest ideal, in mental as well as in physical endowments.

in all their kingdoms] More correctly, *in all their* **royalty** or kingship, there is none so royal as Jehovah.

8. *brutish and foolish*] The brutishness expressed by the Hebr. word is not that of vice, but of men in a savage state, little better than mere animals: the folly that of stupidity. The man must be debased and stupid who can worship an idol. See note on Ps. xcii. 6. The Hebr. for *altogether* lit. is *in one* (marg.). The usual phrase is *as one;* but there is no reason for disturbing the translation.

the stock is *a doctrine of vanities*] Rather, **the instruction of idols is a piece of wood.** That *vanities* means *idols,* see note on Ps. xxxi. 6, and, in fact, except in Eccles. this is its regular signification. The *teaching* then, or *instruction,* or *discipline* (for the Hebrew word embraces all these ideas) of idols is just a bit of wood. That is what they are themselves, and ex nihilo nihil fit. The idol cannot give you anything better than itself. Ewald, however, translates as the A. V., *The wood is mere vain teaching.*

9. *Silver...is brought*] The construction runs on regularly from the end of *v.* 8, viz. *It is a piece of wood;* **yea, beaten silver it is,** *which is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz:* **it is the work,** &c. It is a more full description of the manner in which an idol is made than that in *v.* 4.

Tarshish] See note on Gen. x. 4. The beating of gold into gold leaf is referred to in Exod. xxxix. 3, and for the gilding see Isai. xl. 19.

gold from Uphaz] Uphaz elsewhere occurs only in Dan. x. 5, unless *the best gold* in 1 K. x. 18 be really *gold from Uphaz* (מוּפָז for מֻאוּפָז). The word is not to be regarded as an error for *Ophir* upon the authority of the Syriac, because the confusion between the two words is easy in Syriac, but impossible in Hebrew. Probably Uphaz was a place in the neighbourhood of the river Hyphasis, the Sanscrit name for which is Vipâçâ.

blue and purple] Both colours were purple, from dyes obtained from shellfish: but the

God, he *is* the living God, and an [†] everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

[†] Heb. *king of eternity.*

11 Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

12 He [ε] hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

[ε] Gen. 1. 6. chap. 51. 15.

13 When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a [‖] multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings [‖] with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

[‖] Or, *noise.*

[‖] Or, *for rain.*

14 Every man [‖] is [h] brutish in *his* knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

[‖] Or, *is more brutish than to know.* [h] chap. 51. 17, 18.

15 They *are* vanity, *and* the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

16 [i] The portion of Jacob *is* not like them: for he *is* the former of all *things*; and Israel *is* the rod of his inheritance: The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

[i] chap. 51. 19.

17 ¶ Gather up thy wares out

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former had a violet tinge, the latter approached nearer to red. See Winer, 'Realw.' *purpur*, and Exod. xxv. 4.

10. *the true God*] Lit. *a God who is truth, i.e.* a reality.

shall not be able to abide] An archaism for *cannot endure.*

11. *Thus shall ye say*] See Note at end of Chapter.

12. *He hath made*] Or, **Who** *made...* **who** *established...***and** *stretched out.* The first two are participles, lit. *making, establishing*, and refer back to Jehovah at the beginning of *v.* 10, the intervening verse being parenthetical.

by his discretion] Or, **understanding.** The three attributes ascribed to the Creator are very remarkable. The creation of the earth, *eretz*, the material world, is an act of *power;* the *establishing, i.e.* the ordering and arranging it as *tébél*, a place fit for man's abode (see note on Ps. xciii. 1), is the work of his *wisdom;* while the spreading out the heavens over it like a tent is an act of *understanding*, or skill. Naturally, the consideration of these attributes has led many to see here an allusion to the Holy Trinity;—to the Father, whose alone is power; to God the Word, by whom all things were made; and to the Holy Ghost, who is the giver of "understanding in all manner of workmanship," Exod. xxxv. 31.

13. *When he uttereth his voice...heavens*] Lit. *To a voice of His giving a roar of waters in the heavens*, which may perhaps be rendered, *At the thunder He giveth a rush of waters in the heavens, i.e.* the rushing downpour of rain follows immediately upon the thunder. The rest of the verse, excepting one or two grammatical alterations, is identical with Ps. cxxxv. 7; but most probably the words belong to Jeremiah, that psalm being of comparatively late date.

he maketh lightnings with rain] **For the rain**, as in Ps. cxxxv. Cp. Job xxxviii. 25, 26.

14. *Every man is brutish in* his *knowledge*] Rather, **without knowledge**; *i.e.* on comparing his powerless idols with the terrific grandeur of a tropical thunderstorm the man who can still worship them instead of the Creator is no better than a mere savage (see on *v.* 8), and is destitute of knowledge.

every founder is confounded...] Or, **every goldsmith is put to shame** *by the graven image* on which he has exhausted his skill, and which still remains an image.

15. *They* are *vanity*, and *the work of errors*] Rather, *They are vanity*, **a work of mockery**, *i.e.* a thing that deserves only ridicule and contempt. So the Targ., Jerome, &c.

16. *The portion of Jacob*] *i.e.* Jehovah (see note on Ps. cxix. 57) *is not like them*, not like gods made by a carpenter and goldsmith.

for he is *the former of all* things] Lit. *of the all*, the universe.

the rod of his inheritance] See Ps. lxxiv. 2; Isai. lxiii. 17. Gesenius explains the *rod* as that used for measuring, and says that Israel is the country measured out to God. But this is a very poor conception. Far better Henderson, who says the rod is the sceptre, and Israel the people over whom Jehovah especially rules.

17. *Gather up*] The prophet now leaves the subsidiary idea which he has treated in this long parenthesis, *vv.* 1—16, demonstrating therein the folly of idolatry, and returns to

of the land, O † inhabitant of the fortress.

† Heb. *inhabitress.*

18 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, that they may find *it so.*

19 ¶ Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this *is* a grief, and I must bear it.

20 My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is* none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.

21 For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.

22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the [k] north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, *and* a [l] den of dragons.

[k] chap. 1. 15. & 5. 15. & 6. 22.
[l] chap. 9. 11.

23 ¶ O LORD, I know that the [m] way of man *is* not in himself: *it*

[m] Prov. 16. 1. & 20. 24.

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the main subject of his sermon, the conquest of Judæa.

thy wares] Rather, **thy bundle.** It means not goods for trading, but a few articles for necessary use, which could be made up into a bundle, and carried in the hand. The word is not found anywhere else.

out of the land] Many translate, *from the ground, i.e.* take it up in immediate readiness to start; but the A. V. is better, the full meaning being, *gather up thy bundle* and carry it with thee *out of the land.* It shews that they are going into exile.

O inhabitant of the fortress] Lit. *Thou that sittest in the siege, i.e.* thou that art besieged, that inhabitest a besieged town. The previous command shews that the capture of the town is near.

18. *Behold, I will sling out*] For a similar metaphor to express violent ejection from house and home see Isai. xxii. 18.

at this once] Or, *at this* **time.** All previous invasions had ended either in deliverance, or at most in temporary misfortune. God's long-suffering is now exhausted, and this time Judæa must cease to be an independent nation.

that they may find it so] The Hebrew says indefinitely *that they may find,* and every commentator supplies the ellipse after his own fashion. Two explanations only seem tenable, (1) that of the Targum, *I will distress them* with the rigours of a siege *that they may feel it, i.e.* the distress; (2) that of the Syriac, *that they may find* Me, God, that which alone is worth finding. See the note on Ps. xxxii. 6, and comp. Deut. iv. 29; Jer. xxix. 13. Anyhow the word *so* must be omitted.

19. *Woe is me*] Henceforward to the end of the chapter we hear the lamentation of the daughter of Zion, the Jewish Church, at the devastation of the land, and her humble prayer to God for mercy.

hurt] Lit. *breaking,* see ch. iv. 6.

my wound is grievous] Rather, **mortal,** *i.e.* fatal, incurable.

a grief] Really, **my** *grief* (חלי for חלי, see Gen. xvi. 13, &c.).

20. *My tabernacle*] *i.e. tent;* tents being still in ordinary use, especially in the pastoral districts. Jerusalem laments that her tent is plundered, the cords which kept it erect rent asunder, and her children carried into exile, and so *are not,* are dead (Matt. ii. 18), either absolutely, or dead to her in the remote land of their captivity. They can aid the widowed mother no longer in pitching her tent, or in hanging up the curtains round about it. The Targum gives the general sense thus:—"My land is desolate, and all my cities plundered: my people are gone into captivity, and are not."

21. *the pastors*] The *shepherds, i.e.* the princes, see on ch. ii. 8, iii. 15.

brutish] See on *v.* 8.

therefore they shall not prosper] Rather, *therefore they* **have** *not* **governed wisely.** The verb, as is well known, has the sense, (1) of acting prudently; and (2) of being prosperous, as the necessary consequence (see note on Isai. lii. 13). Here all the versions take it in the first sense. The kings and rulers, having sunk to the condition of barbarous and untutored men, could not govern wisely, and so *all their flocks,* lit. *their pasturing,* that which they governed, *are scattered.*

22. *Behold, the noise of the bruit is come*] Better, **A voice is heard,** *Behold! it cometh!* The voice or cry consists of these very words, that the enemy is coming.

The *great commotion* is the confused noise of the army on its march, see ch. viii. 16.

a den of dragons] *i.e.* **of jackals;** see ch. ix. 11. This verse shews that the ruin bewailed in the three preceding verses is really still future.

23. *O* LORD, *I know...*] At the rumour

is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

24 O LORD, [n] correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou [t] bring me to nothing.

25 [o] Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

[n] Psál. 6. 1. & 38. 1. chap. 30. 11.
[t] Heb. *diminish me.*
[o] Psal. 79. 6.

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of the enemy's approach the nation betakes itself to prayer, or rather, Jeremiah utters in its name such a supplication as would be most appropriate to the miserable estate of men overtaken by the divine justice. He first acknowledges that man cannot direct *his way*, his path in life, himself, dependent as it is only in part upon his own will, and in part upon the conduct of others, and everywhere upon God. There is an antithesis between *man*, *i.e.* any man, in the first clause, and the word in the second clause, which means *man in his strength*. The strong man may fancy that at least each single step is under his own control, even if his whole path be not; but God declares otherwise, Prov. xvi. 9.

24. *correct me, but with judgment*] In ch. xxx. 11 the word judgment (with a different preposition) is rendered *in measure;* as also in ch. xlvi. 28, where God threatens to destroy the heathen utterly, but to correct Jacob *in measure*. The contrast therefore is between punishment inflicted in anger, the object of which is to cause pain to the criminal, and that inflicted as a duty of justice, and of which the object is the criminal's reformation.

lest thou bring me to nothing] Lit. *lest thou make me little*, reduce me to an insignificant people, and so the marg. The A.V., however, gives the best general sense.

25. *Pour out...*] This verse occurs also in Ps. lxxix. 6, 7, with the change only of *families* for *kingdoms*, and the omission in the psalm of the words, *they have devoured him and consumed him.*

With this prayer Jeremiah concludes his prophecy. Jacob is still God's people, though erring: the heathen are devouring him, not as the ministers of divine chastisement, but as wild beasts, to gratify their hatred of true religion. He prays, therefore, that God would punish Jacob so far only as would bring him to true repentance, but that he would pour forth his anger upon the heathen, as upon that which opposes itself to God. So will that kingdom be established which "shall break in pieces and consume all heathen kingdoms, and itself stand for ever" (Dan. ii. 44).

NOTES on CHAP. X. 1—16, 11, 17.

The first sixteen verses of this chapter are regarded by De Wette, Hitzig, Nägelsb., and others as an interpolation, and Movers even thinks that they may have been written by the author of the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah. The phraseology, however, of itself disposes of this idea. Nor is there much weight in the assertion that this proof of the nothingness of idols was out of place in Jeremiah's time, and belonged to the later days of the exile. This is to assume that the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah are not genuine, and then to use this assumption as a test for other books. The argument against the reality of idols was as much in place in the mouths of those who were resisting idolatry when on the increase, as of those who were triumphing over its fall. Jeremiah's whole struggle was against a dominant idolatry, and the demonstration of its futility in this sermon was most opportune. The only argument of real importance is that these verses break the continuity of thought; but the whole chapter is somewhat fragmentary, and not so closely connected as the previous three. Still there is a connection. The prophet had just included all Israel under the ban of uncircumcision: he now shews them their last chance of safety by enlarging upon the truth which he had before declared in ch. ix. 23, 24. Their true glory is their God, not an idol of wood, but the King of nations. He is Jacob's true portion, and had they made Him their defence, He would have delivered them. This is the train of thought in these sixteen verses; then comes the sad feeling that they have rejected God and chosen idols, *vv.* 17, 18; then the nation's deep grief, *vv.* 19—22, and earnest prayer, *vv.* 23—25. It is quite possible that only portions of the concluding part of Jeremiah's temple-sermon were embodied in Baruch's roll, and that had the whole been preserved, we should have found that the thoughts in the conclusion followed upon one another by as orderly a development as those in chapters vii.—ix.

It is important to notice that these sixteen verses, excepting *vv.* 6, 7, 8, 10, are found also in the Septuagint. Upon the value of this fact, see the Introduction, p. 325.

11. This verse is written in Chaldee, for which reason Venema, Ewald, Henderson and others, reject it as a gloss. But all the versions

acknowledge it, and even the LXX., whose support of it seems decisive. Seb. Schmidt accounts for its being written in Chaldee by the supposition that the exiles were to use these very words as a retort whenever asked by the Chaldees to join in their idol-worship. More probably it was a proverbial saying, which Jeremiah inserts in its popular form. In favour of this is the play of words, אבד in the second clause answering to עבד in the first, the harsh form ארקא for ארעא, and the repetition of שמיא. As אלה, *these*, is Hebrew, the Chaldee being אלין, most commentators refer it to the gods, *They shall perish from the earth, and from under heaven, even these* gods. More probably like ארקא it belonged to the Aramaic of the common people. Both the LXX. and the Syriac support the A. V. in referring it to the heavens.

17. The Masorites have changed without reason יושבתי, an interesting form, as retaining the final י of the combined pronoun, into יושבת. See ch. xxii. 23, li. 13, where the same archaic spelling appears.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Jeremiah proclaimeth God's covenant,* 8 *rebuketh the Jews' disobeying thereof,* 11 *prophesieth evils to come upon them,* 18 *and upon the men of Anathoth, for conspiring to kill Jeremiah.*

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; [a]Cursed *be* the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, [a] Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, [b]Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God: [b] Lev. 26. 3, 12.

5 That I may perform the [c]oath [c] Deut. 7. 12.

JEREMIAH'S SIXTH PROPHECY.

Chaps. xi., xii.

The Curse of the broken Covenant.

INTRODUCTION.—The prophecy contained in these two chapters seems to form a whole, and to belong to an early period of Jeremiah's life. For the covenant referred to in *v.* 3 was certainly that renewed by Josiah in his eighteenth year, after the discovery of the book of the law in the temple (2 K. xxiii. 3); while the general prevalence of idolatry alluded to in *v.* 13 apparently refers to the public establishment of it by Manasseh (ib. xxi. 3). Too early there seem to have been indications that the people took no hearty part in Josiah's reformation, and the prophet therefore sets before them the consequences that will inevitably follow upon their disloyalty to their covenant God. The opinion of those commentators who would place this prophecy in Jehoiakim's reign is at variance with the fact that Jeremiah had not as yet entirely ceased to dwell at Anathoth, nor is there any proof that Jehoiakim ever publicly reversed his father's acts.

The arrangement is as follows: first there is a reminder of the covenant made between Jehovah and Israel, *vv.* 1—8; but Israel and Judah alike have broken the covenant, *vv.* 9—13, and so are bringing upon themselves retribution, *vv.* 14—17; upon this follows an account of what probably called forth the prophecy, the conspiracy of the men of Anathoth to murder Jeremiah, *vv.* 18—23, in which they were abetted by his own relatives, ch. xii. 1—6; for such deeds, which but too well represented the nation's whole course, punishment must come, *vv.* 7—13, yet with the alternative of pardon upon repentance, *vv.* 14—17.

CHAP. XI. 2. *the words of this covenant*] This is the very phrase used in 2 K. xxiii. 3 to describe the contents of the book of the law just discovered.

3. *Cursed* be *the man that obeyeth not...*] The verb in Deut. xxvii. 26, whence Jeremiah quotes these words, is *confirmeth*, the object of the promulgation of the law upon Mounts Ebal and Gerizim being that the people might solemnly pledge themselves to its observance. But upon this pledge must follow obedience, and to it the men of Judah had just bound themselves in the most solemn way.

4. *out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace*] Rather, **out of** *the iron furnace.* The iron furnace was Egypt, see Deut. iv. 20. The constant reference to Deuteronomy shews how great had been the effect upon Jeremiah's mind of the public recitation of the "book of the covenant" found in the temple. Thus the words, *Obey*, lit. **Hear** *my voice and do them*, are taken from Deut. xxviii. 1; and *ye shall be my people*, from Deut. xxix. 13.

5. *That I may perform...*] See Deut. vii. 12, 13.

which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day.

† Heb. *Amen.* Then answered I, and said, † So be it, O LORD.

6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.

7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day *that* I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

8 Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every

‖ Or, *stubbornness.* one in the ‖ imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did *them* not.

9 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able † to escape; and [d] though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

† Heb. *to go forth of.*

[d] Prov. 1. 28.

12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their † trouble.

Isai. 1. 15. chap. 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 18. Micah 3. 4.

† Heb. *evil.*

13 For *according to* the number of thy [e] cities were thy gods, O Judah; and *according to* the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to *that* † shameful thing, *even* altars to burn incense unto Baal.

[e] chap. 2. 28.

† Heb. *shame.*

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as it is *this day*] See Deut. ii. 30, iv. 20, &c. The Jews were still in possession of the promised land, and it was still rich and fertile. So far God had kept the terms of the covenant. Whether it would permanently remain their property would depend upon their own observance of their part of the covenant.

So be it, O LORD] Or, **Amen**, *Jehovah* (marg.). The prophet was literally obeying the command given in Deut. xxvii. 14—26, and the same word should be kept in both places.

6. *Proclaim...in the cities of Judah*] It is probably true, as Henderson and Nägelsbach think, that Jeremiah accompanied Josiah in his progress described in 2 K. xxiii. 15—20, and that he everywhere read to the people the words of the newly-found book. The word *proclaim* means also to *read aloud*, 2 K. xxii. 8, 10, 16, &c.

8. *imagination*] **Stubbornness**, see ch. iii. 17.

therefore I will bring] Rather, **I have brought**. The constant testimony of their history was that the breach of the covenant upon their part had always brought temporal calamity. The last examples were the deportation of the ten tribes by Shalmanezer, and the leading of Manasseh prisoner to Nineveh in chains (see note on 2 Chro. xxxiii. 11).

9. *A conspiracy*] Nothing more may be meant by this than that the defection from the covenant was as general as if it had been the result of preconcerted arrangement. But the times were troubled: and the decided course taken by Josiah may have led the opposite party to secret combinations against him.

10. *their forefathers*] The Hebrew is more express, being literally, *their fathers, the first ones*, cp. *thy first father*, Isai. xliii. 27. The allusion is thus confined to the idolatries committed in the wilderness, and by the generations whose history is given in the Book of Judges.

and they went after] Rather, **yea! they have walked** *after other gods to serve them.* The emphatic *they* inserted in the Hebrew shews that this clause refers to the men of the present day, and therefore the definite perfect must be used.

11. *Behold, I will bring*] Rather, **am bringing**, cp. iv. 6, vi. 19, xix. 3.

12, 13. For these verses cp. ch. ii. 28.

13. *streets of Jerusalem*] See vii. 17.

that *shameful thing*] *i.e.* Baal; see iii. 24. The erection of altars to Baal in every street of Jerusalem betokens a public establishment of idolatry, such as actually took place in the reign of Manasseh, 2 K. xviii. 4; 2 Chro. xxxiii. 3.

14 Therefore *f* pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry unto me for their † trouble.

15 *g* † What hath my beloved to do in mine house, *seeing* she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? ‖ when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.

16 The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, *and* of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

17 For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

18 ¶ And the LORD hath given me knowledge *of it*, and I know *it*: then thou shewedst me their doings.

19 But I *was* like a lamb *or* an ox

f chap. 7. 16. & 14. 11.

† Heb. *evil.*

g Isai. 1. 11, &c.

† Heb. *What* is *to my beloved in my house?*

‖ Or, *when thy evil* is.

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14. *Therefore pray not thou*] This section, *vv.* 14—17, is parenthetical. As intercession was a prophet's duty, he might be expected at a time of such universal apostasy to be instant in his entreaties. But, as in ch. vii. 16, all intercession is forbidden, and the reason for this prohibition given. Prayer for others for the forgiveness of their sins avails only when they pray too. But the cry of the people now was that of the guilty smarting under punishment, not of the penitent mourning over sin. Instead of *for their trouble* the ancient versions and several MSS. read, *in the time of their trouble.*

15. *What hath my beloved to do in mine house*] *My beloved* is Judah, see ch. xii. 7. In spite of their sins Israel and Judah were beloved of God, Hos. xi. 1, 4, and see note on Jer. ii. 2. This passage, like Isai. i. 12, rebukes the inconsistency of their public worship of Jehovah with their private immorality and preference for idolatry.

seeing *she hath wrought lewdness with many*] Rather, *to practise lewdness;* lit. *to practise it, even lewdness.* Though this word means any *purpose*, yet it is usually found in a bad sense, for *guile;* see note on Ps. cxxxix. 20. The word translated *many* belongs to the next clause, on which see Note at end of Chapter. The whole verse should be translated, *What hath my beloved in my house to practise guile there? The chiefs and the holy flesh shall pass away from thee.*

when thou doest evil...] This clause lit. is, *When thy evil—then thou rejoicest.* Commentators supply the ellipse in various ways, but none is more satisfactory than the A. V.

16. *A green olive tree*] To this tree David compares himself in Ps. lii. 8, and Hosea, ch. xiv. 6, uses it as a symbol of the happiness of the coming times of the Messiah. Its *goodly* or rather *shapely fruit*, lit. *fruit of form*, signifies the righteousness and faith which ought to have been the result of Israel's possession of extraordinary privileges, cp. Isai. v. 2. It did not bear this fruit, and what right then has the olive-tree in the garden? It is not there by inherent right, but by the terms of a covenant which it has broken, and God now destroys it by a thunderstorm.

with the noise of a great tumult] The word rendered *tumult* occurs only elsewhere in Ezek. i. 24, and is there used for the noise made by an army on its march: such may be its meaning here, for Jeremiah is remarkable for never letting his metaphors interfere with his literal meaning. Still it may mean any confused noise, as of a tempest, and the words may be paraphrased thus: "With the crashing of a tempest He hath set fire to it, *i.e.* struck it with lightning, and its branches break, *i.e.* are shivered by the thunderbolt." This is the only place where the Hebr. verb *to break* is used intransitively, but there is an analogous use of a similar verb in Isai. xlii. 4.

17. *the LORD of hosts, that planted thee*] Jehovah, as its planter, had the right to destroy the tree if it did not fulfil the purpose for which He had planted it.

18. *And the LORD hath given me knowledge* of it, *and I know* it] Rather, **gave** *me knowledge of it, and I* **knew** it. In this section, *vv.* 18—23, Jeremiah shews that the general conspiracy of the people against Jehovah was accompanied by a special plot of his own townsmen to murder himself: and that plot was discovered by no human means, but its existence was revealed to him by God.

then] *i.e.* when Jeremiah was living in fancied security among them, being ignorant of their secret machinations.

19. *But I* was *like a lamb* or *an ox*] Rather, with St Jerome, *like a* **tame** *lamb.* No version renders *alluf*, "an ox," but the idea was taken from Ps. cxliv. 14, where see Note. Properly it means *domesticated*, and as the ox was a necessary member of the ancient family, said by Hesiod, 'Op.' 403, to consist of "the husband, the wife, and the ploughing ox," it may very well be called the *domestic* in poetry. But such a translation is utterly wrong here. Je-

that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, *saying*, Let us de-
† Heb. *the stalk with his bread.* stroy † the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

20 But, O LORD of hosts, that
h 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Psal. 7. 9. chap. 17. 10. & 20. 12. Rev. 2. 23. *h* triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD of the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Prophesy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand:

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will † punish them: † Heb. *visit upon.* the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine:

23 And there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, *even* the year of their visitation.

remiah compares himself to a tame lamb, common in Arab tents and with the Hebrews, see 2 S. xii. 3. He had lived at Anathoth as one of the family, never suspecting that, like a tame lamb, the time would come for him to be killed.

Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof] Lit. *the tree in its bread.* The words are evidently those of a proverb or dark saying, and there is no difficulty therefore in a word, which though it properly means bread is often put for food in general, being here used for fruit. St Jerome well says upon this verse; "All the churches agree in understanding that under the person of Jeremiah these things are said by Christ. For he is the lamb brought to the slaughter that opened not its mouth. The tree is his cross, and the bread his body: for he saith himself, *I am the bread that came down from heaven.* And of him they purposed to cut him off from the land of the living, that his name should no more be remembered."

20. *for unto thee have I revealed my cause*] So all the versions; otherwise, from a comparison with Ps. xxii. 8, Prov. xvi. 3, one would have rendered, *for upon Thee have I rolled my cause*, *i.e.* have entrusted it to Thee. The rendering of the A.V. is, however, strictly grammatical. The verse occurs again in ch. xx. 12; cp. also xvii. 10, and note on xxxiii. 6.

21. *Prophesy not...*] Apparently the men of Anathoth had first tried to frighten Jeremiah into silence; but finding him intractable had then determined upon his murder.

22. *the young men*] *i.e.* those of the legal age for military service. In the siege of Jerusalem these will perish in battle, while the children, both sons and daughters, cooped up within the walls will die of famine.

23. *there shall be no remnant of them*] But 128 men of Anathoth returned from exile, Ezra ii. 23; Neh. vii. 27. This shews that Jeremiah's denunciation was limited to those who had sought his life.

even *the year*] *i.e.* the year of their visitation was itself the evil spoken of just before, so Jerome. Better perhaps the LXX., *in the year of their visitation.* This would be at the siege of Jerusalem, when Anathoth being in its immediate vicinity would doubtless be occupied by the enemy in force, and have more than its share of the horrors of war.

NOTE on CHAP. XI. 15.

The construction of the word הָרַבִּים, translated *with many*, is very difficult. Henderson makes it, though m. pl., agree with מְזִמָּה which is fem. sing., and in this he is supported by the Vulg. and Syr. But the ancient versions are too often indifferent to matters of strict grammatical accuracy. The LXX. read הנדרים vows, and render, *Will vows and holy flesh, i.e.* sacrifices, *take away thy sins?* If any alteration of the text is permitted this is by far the most probable. For Umbreit's suggestion פָּרִים for רַבִּים, *will oxen and sacrifices*, &c., there is no support in the versions. If we retain the Masoretic text we must with Stäudlin understand רַבִּים of the princes. *Thy great ones*, in which thy earthly strength consists, *and thy sacrifices*, on which depends thy religious sanctity, *shall pass away from thee.* The verse remains harsh and difficult, but to obtain the sense of the LXX. we must make numerous alterations, and read, הַנְּדָרִים וּבְשַׂר־קֹדֶשׁ יַעֲבִירוּ מֵעָלַיִךְ רָעָתֵךְ אוֹ תֶחֱלָצִי *Will thy vows and sacrifices take away from thee thy wickedness, or wilt thou escape?* Even retaining נאז תעלזי *then thou mayest rejoice*, the changes are too many to be admissible, though it is very probable that the text of this verse is corrupt. The Arabic suggests the easier change of הרבים into הֲרָנַיִם, *Will thy prayers and sacrifices*, &c. But probably it simply took εὐχαί in the sense of *prayers.*

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Jeremiah, complaining of the wicked's prosperity, by faith seeth their ruin.* 5 *God admonisheth him of his brethren's treachery against him,* 7 *and lamenteth his heritage.* 14 *He promiseth to the penitent return from captivity.*

RIGHTEOUS *art* thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet [l] let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: [a] Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: [†] they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou *art* near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

3 But thou, O LORD, [b] knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart [†] toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.

4 How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, [c] for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? the beasts are consum-

[l] Or, *let me reason the case with thee.*
[a] Job 21. 7. Psal. 37. 1. & 73. 3. Hab. 1. 4.
[†] Heb. *they go on.*
[b] Psal. 17. 3.
[†] Heb. *with thee.*
[c] Psal. 107. 34.

CHAP. XII. Many commentators regard this chapter as made up of three extracts, *vv.* 1—6, 7—13, 14—17, from discourses of Jeremiah not preserved at length; others regard it as a connected discourse occasioned by a drought in the days of Josiah, to which they think reference is made in *v.* 4; while others see in the "evil neighbours" of *v.* 14 an allusion to the bands of Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, who infested the land towards the close of Jehoiakim's reign, after his revolt from Nebuchadnezzar. More probably the outburst of expostulation in *vv.* 1—4 was occasioned by the plot of the men of Anathoth. It is in exact keeping with the prophet's complaints elsewhere (ch. iv. 10, xv. 15—18, &c.), and upon it the rest follows naturally.

1. *yet let me talk with thee of* thy *judgments*] Rather, **yet will I speak with Thee on a matter of right.** The phrase *to speak judgments with* a person means to discuss a legal question with him, the plural being used because the matter is indefinite. This sense is very well given in the margin of the A.V., *yet let me reason the case with thee.* In the first clause the prophet acknowledges the general righteousness of God's dealings, but in the rest of the verse denies that he can reconcile with that righteousness the prosperity of the conspirators of Anathoth. As the sanctions of the Mosaic covenant were chiefly temporal this difficulty was often present to the minds of the saints of the Old Testament, see Job xxi. 7, &c.; Pss. xxxvii., lxxiii., and many others, and the apocryphal book of Wisdom.

wherefore *are all they happy*] Rather, **secure**, tranquil.

2. *thou* art *near in their mouth, and far from their reins*] *i.e.* from their heart. The reins were regarded by the Jews as the seat of the affections (see note on Ps. vii. 9).

3. *thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee*] Rather, **Thou seest me, and triest** *mine heart* at all times, and knowest the sincerity of its devotion *toward Thee*, in contrast with the mouth-service of the wicked.

pull them out] The original is very strong, *tear them out*, used in ch. x. 20, of the rending asunder of the cords of the tent, and in Ezek. xvii. 9, of the tearing up of roots. Jeremiah does not doubt God's justice, or the ultimate punishment of the wicked, but he wants it done in a summary way. His words then mean, Drag them by main force out of the flock, and make examples of them, that all men may acknowledge that there is One who judgeth the earth.

prepare] Lit. *sanctify, i.e.* devote, see note on ch. i. 5.

4. *How long...*] The Hebrew divides this verse differently from the A.V. *How long shall the land mourn, and the herb of the* **whole** *field wither? Because of the wickedness of them that dwell therein* **cattle** *and fowl* **have ceased to be**: *for he will not see, say they, our latter end.* The people who say this are the inhabitants of the *field*, or open country, put here for the whole land: and the person who will not see their end is the prophet, whom they mock, saying, In spite of all his threatenings we shall outlive him.

Many expositors find a contradiction between this and the preceding verses. But Jeremiah does not mean that all wicked men prospered; what he complained of was that at a time of great general misery powerful men throve upon the ruin of others. Even the innocent cattle and fowl suffered with the rest. Now, to Jeremiah, it seemed that all this might have been cured by some signal and violent display of the divine justice. If God, instead of dealing with men by general laws, which involve all in their slow working, would tear some of the worst offenders out from among the rest, and so vindicate His righteous government, the land might yet be saved.

ed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end.

5 ¶ If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, *wherein* thou trustedst, *they wearied thee*, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?

[d] chap. 9. 4. 6 For even [d] thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, ‖ they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not, though they speak † fair words unto thee.

‖ Or, *they cried after thee fully.* † Heb. *good things.*

7 ¶ I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given † the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.

† Heb. *the love.*

8 Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it ‖ † crieth out against me: therefore have I hated it.

‖ Or, *yelleth.* † Heb. *giveth out his voice.*

9 Mine heritage *is* unto me *as* a ‖ speckled bird, the birds round about *are* against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, ‖ come to devour.

‖ Or, *taloned.* ‖ Or, *cause them to come.*

10 Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made

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5. *If thou hast run...*] In this and the following verse Jehovah rebukes Jeremiah's impatience, shewing him by two proverbial sayings, that there were still greater trials of faith in store for him. The sight of prosperous wickedness is after all a mere ordinary trial, a mere running with the footmen. The time is coming when he will have to exert far greater powers of endurance.

and if *in the land of peace...*] Rather, *and in a land of peace thou art secure; but how wilt thou do amid the pride of Jordan? i.e.* if thou canst feel safe only where all things are tranquil, what wilt thou do in the hour of danger? The *pride of Jordan* does not mean its rapid overflow, as the A.V. takes it (and so Ewald, Umbreit, &c.), but the luxuriant thickets along its banks, famous as the haunt of lions (cp. ch. xlix. 19, l. 44; Zech. xi. 3). What will the prophet do when he has to tread the tangled maze of a jungle with the lions roaring round him, if he can feel secure only in the midst of tranquillity?

6. *they have called a multitude after thee*] Rather, *yea, they have called* **aloud** *after thee.* See ch. iv. 5. In the troublous times coming upon Jeremiah his own relatives will join the hue and cry after him, as Luther well translates these words. In all this Jeremiah was the type of Christ, cp. Zech. xiii. 6; Mark iii. 21; John vii. 5, and for the cry, Mark xv. 13, 14.

7. *I have forsaken*] See Note at end of Chapter.

mine house] Not the temple, but Israel and Judah. From what follows it is plain that Jehovah, and not the prophet, is the speaker.

I have left] More correctly, *I have* **cast away** *mine heritage.*

the dearly beloved of my soul] Cp. ch. xi. 15.

into the hand of her enemies] Lit. *the palm.* The hand in Hebrew is used of the firm grasp which crushes resistance: but things incapable of resistance were held upon the hollow formed by curving the hand. Thus in Bonomi's 'Nineveh,' p. 188, the guests at a banquet may be seen holding their drinking vessels each upon his hollowed palm. So universal was this practice that in Gen. xl. 11 the Hebrew is, *I set the cup upon Pharaoh's palm.*

8. *Mine heritage is*] Or, **is become** *unto me.* On the force of the Hebrew verb see note on ch. i. 2.

as a lion in the forest] Judah has not merely refused obedience, but shewn itself intractable and fierce, like an untamed lion. It has roared against God with open blasphemy, and therefore Jehovah has not merely withdrawn His love, but *hates* it. As His favour is life, so is His hatred death, *i.e.* Jerusalem must fall, and its punishment be as severe as if inflicted by one that hated her.

9. This verse must be translated interrogatively, being so in the Hebrew: *Is my heritage unto me as a speckled bird? Are the birds upon her round about? Come, assemble all the* **wild beasts: bring them** *to devour her.* The affirmative to the two questions is to be supplied, and hence the summons to the wild beasts to join the birds in destroying her. The word for bird in both places means a carrion-bird, or bird of prey; and by a *speckled* or particoloured *bird* is probably meant some kind of vulture. Gesenius and many modern commentators understand by it the hyæna, and so the LXX., but the Vulg. and Syr. agree with the A.V. The custom of birds mobbing birds of prey is well known, but we know of no custom of their mobbing hyænas.

10. *Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard*] The vine, if injured when it first comes into leaf, bleeds to death: it thus has to be carefully guarded till near midsummer, at which time its luxuriant foliage exhausts all its superabundant sap. But the hedge which fenced Judah around has been thrown down,

† Heb. *portion of desire.*

my † pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

11 They have made it desolate, *and being* desolate it mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth *it* to heart.

12 The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness: for the sword of the LORD shall devour from the *one* end of the land even to the *other* end of the land: no flesh shall have peace.

e Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 38. Micah 6. 15. Hag. 1. 6.

13 e They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, *but* shall not profit: and they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will f pluck them out of their land, f Deut. 30. 3. chap. 32. 37. and pluck out the house of Judah from among them.

15 And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man

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and Nebuchadnezzar and his confederate kings (ch. vi. 3) trample her under foot, as heedless of the ruin they are inflicting upon her as the shepherds would be who led their flocks to browse in spring upon the tender shoots of the vine. *Pastor* for shepherd is never found in any book of the Old Testament in the A.V. except in Jeremiah.

11. *They have made it desolate*] The verb in the Hebrew is impersonal, *one has set it for a desolation, i.e. it is made desolate.* The whole force lies in this last word. The former verse had ended with God's portion of the earth changed into a desolate wilderness, and thrice in this verse the prophet dwells upon the gloomy picture of its condition during the years of the captivity.

because no man layeth it *to heart*] Rather, **laid it** *to heart.* Had the people laid it to heart this sad state of things would have been averted. Now the desolate land must put up its silent cry to God, because the people had refused to see the signs of the coming retribution.

12. *The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness*] *Upon all the bare heights* in *the wilderness,* see on ch. iii. 2. Even these remote scaurs do not escape, polluted as they had been by the nation's idolatries.

for the sword of the LORD shall devour] **Devoureth.** The previous words are very strong, being *for a sword to Jehovah, i.e.* He hath a sword; these hosts of war come as His weapon, and as such destroy the whole land. See note on ch. vi. 25.

no flesh shall have peace] *Flesh* as in Gen. vi. 3 means mankind as sinners. The context limits it here to Judah. *Peace* in Hebrew has the wider signification of *welfare, happiness.* Hence it was their salutation in life, "Peace be to thee," and in death was engraved upon their sepulchres "In peace."

13. *They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns*] Rather, **and have reaped** *thorns.* So the next clause is, *They have wearied themselves with toil,* **they have profited nothing.** The words must not be taken literally, as though Judah had really been sowing good seed; the force of the proverb is that all their labours (the object of which had of course been their own happiness) had ended only in disappointment.

and they shall be ashamed of your revenues] The verb is in the imper., **yea, be ashamed of your produce** *because of the hot anger of Jehovah.* The word translated in the A.V. *revenues* means the produce of the fields, and is thus in strict keeping with the metaphor in the rest of the verse. *Revenues* had this meaning in old time.

14. *Thus saith the LORD*] The speaker is no longer Jehovah, but the prophet: and the people addressed are no longer Judah, but the spoilers. Jeremiah therefore to mark the change prefixes to his words the usual formula. Cp. ch. xiv. 15, where the same rule is observed.

mine evil neighbours] These were doubtless the Syrians, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines, but the history of Judah is too concisely told for us to be justified in concluding that the prophet referred to the marauding expeditions spoken of in 2 K. xxiv. 2. At all times of Judah's weakness the neighbouring states were sure enough to take advantage of it. Far more important is it to notice that God did pluck all these petty tribes out of their land by the same hand that carried Judah away captive, but that by a special intervention of His providence He again plucked Judah out from among them, and permitted her to return home. Still this special mercy to Judah was but the prelude to mercy to the whole Gentile world.

15. *I will return, and have compassion on them*] *i.e. I will again have compassion on them.* The verb *to return* constantly has this

to his heritage, and every man to his land.

16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people.

17 But if they will not [g] obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD. [g] Isai. 60. 12.

force in Hebrew, cp. Isai. vi. 13, xxxv. 10; Jer. xxx. 10, &c.

16, 17. *if they will diligently learn*] The accomplishment of this blessing depends upon both Judah and the Gentiles reversing their past conduct. Up to this time they had perpetually drawn Judah aside, and taught her idolatry, to swear by their Baalim: now Judah must teach them the true faith, and make them swear by Jehovah: see note on ch. iv. 2. Upon this will follow a blessing, the exact opposite of the former punishment. Then Judah was torn away from the midst of the heathen who had corrupted her by their evil teaching, and her testimony was heard no more. Now by receiving the truth which had been committed to her keeping (Rom. iii. 2) they will be built up within her borders and share her privileges. The believing Gentile is to be admitted within the fold of the true, because spiritual Israel, Christ's Church.

NOTE on CHAP. XII. 7—13, 14—17.

Many commentators find in these two strophes an utter discrepancy from what precedes, and treat them as fragments, of which the former was part of a wail uttered over Jerusalem after its capture, while the latter belonged perhaps to a prophecy spoken in the seventh or eighth year of Jehoiakim. On the contrary, they are an essential part of the answer to Jeremiah's expostulation with the Almighty upon the seeming unrighteousness of His dealings. In *vv.* 5, 6, God had prepared the prophet for a still harder trial of his faith. That trial could only consist in the increasing misery of the nation accompanied by a greater corruption of morals, and a more thorough abandonment of Jehovah's worship, culminating finally in the destruction of Jerusalem. In such a state of things Jeremiah's position must every day become more difficult and dangerous; and therefore Jehovah, in *vv.* 7—9, shews that the downfall of the nation was occasioned by no want of love on His part, but was a just necessity caused by His people setting themselves as a roaring lion against Him. But no sooner is His protection withdrawn than enemies on every side begin the work of retribution by trampling down that land which was once God's heritage, *vv.* 10—13. But as Jeremiah's doubts concerned not merely the wicked in Judah, but the prosperity of evildoers generally, in *vv.* 14, 15 the question is raised as to the heathen. Why should the neighbouring nations, who were not merely idolaters, but the originators of idolatry, be prosperous, and triumph over Judah, while she was so severely punished for imitating them? The answer in *vv.* 16, 17, is that Judah held a special relation toward both Jehovah and the heathen, and that the capture of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile were but louder calls to repentance, in order that the nation might perform its allotted task. Judah's office was to regenerate the world, and heathen nations were to be saved or perish according as they listened to or hardened themselves against her teaching.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *In the type of a linen girdle, hidden at Euphrates, God prefigureth the destruction of his people.* 12 *Under the parable of the bottles filled with wine he foretelleth their drunkenness in misery.* 15 *He exhorteth to prevent their future judgments.* 22 *He sheweth their abominations are the cause thereof.*

JEREMIAH'S SEVENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xiii.

The linen Girdle.

INTRODUCTION.—The date of this prophecy is fixed by the mention of the queen-mother in *v.* 18 (*gebirah* not *malcah*, queen). Whether Jehoiachin was eighteen years old at his accession, as stated in 2 K. xxiv. 8, or only eight, as stated in 2 Chro. xxxvi. 9, at all events his mother, Nehushta, was associated with him in the government, and carried captive with him to Babylon (ch. xxix. 2). With this date—the three months reign of Jehoiachin,—all the indications of time in the narrative very closely agree. We have in it one of those symbolical acts by which great lessons were taught the people more impressively than by words. Were, then, these symbolical acts really performed by the prophets, or are they allegories only, for the more graphic

THUS saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water.

2 So I got a girdle according to the word of the LORD, and put *it* on my loins.

3 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying,

4 Take the girdle that thou hast got, which *is* upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.

5 So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.

6 And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there.

7 Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing.

8 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.

10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the

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representation of some idea? Now, here many argue that if the action were a fact Jeremiah would have had to journey twice to the Euphrates, a distance from Jerusalem of more than two hundred miles. But this is a mere assumption; for it is quite evident that after the burning of the roll in the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah disappeared from Jerusalem, and did not shew himself there again till the king's affairs were in so desperate a state that he could not take vengeance upon him even for the stern prophecy contained in ch. xxii. 13—19. Where he spent the intervening seven years we know not, but certainly we find no trace of his activity till the last few mournful days of Jehoiakim, when he was once again seen in the streets of Jerusalem, with his prophetic robe of black camels' hair girt about with this girdle, mildewed and water-stained as the symbol of the pitiable estate of a nation which had rejected its God. His place of refuge may have been near the Euphrates, but at all events we cannot draw any conclusions from things absolutely unknown to us. Many of these acts may have been allegories, but this we believe to have been literally true.

CHAP. XIII. 1. *a linen girdle*] A *girdle*, because that was the indispensable companion of all human activity: and of *linen*, because that was the appointed dress of the priestly order (Lev. xvi. 4, &c.).

put it not in water] The meaning of this prohibition is much debated. St Jerome and Grotius think, that as water softens linen, the command was intended to symbolize the obstinate continuance of the people in sin. Hitzig thinks that it means that Jeremiah was never to take it off. Graf, that he was to keep it clean and new, in contrast with its subsequent mouldy condition. But most modern commentators understand by it that the girdle was never to be washed, and so represented the deep-grained pollution of the people.

4. *go to Euphrates*] Ewald argues from the Arabic that Phrath may mean any river-channel. In answer to this it is enough to say that in the other fifteen places in which Phrath occurs, either with *river* prefixed to it or without, it always means the Euphrates. But still less is the fancy to be received that Phrath means Ephrata. The sole object of this criticism is to save the prophet the labour of two supposed journeys from Jerusalem to the Euphrates. But really, as we have shewn above, we know nothing of Jeremiah's personal history at this time, and the Euphrates alone suits the sense. For at Babylon, on the banks of that river, Judah was hidden away for a time, with all her national glory gone, lost as it were among the heathen, yet really secure as in a hole of the rock, till after many days God once again brought her forth, feeble and humbled, yet only made the more fit thereby for fulfilling the high purpose of her calling.

in a hole of the rock] *In a* **cleft** *of the rock.* As there are no fissured rocks in Babylonia, the place where Jeremiah hid the girdle must have been somewhere in the upper part of the river, before it enters at Pylae the flat alluvial plains between which it flows throughout the rest of its course.

6. *after many days*] By the many days are signified the seventy years captivity.

7. *I went...and digged*] Probably Jeremiah had filled the cleft with earth and gravel to prevent the girdle being lost.

9. *the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem*] The nation is to return humiliated and stript, not of its spiritual, but of its temporal greatness. For the divine purpose it was more fit than before, but to the eyes of men the returning exiles were but a feeble folk.

10. *This evil people, which...walk in the imagination* (**stubbornness**) *of their heart*]

‖Or, *stubbornness.* ‖ imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.

11 For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

12 ¶ Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word; Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine?

13 Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness.

14 And I will dash them † one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, † but destroy them.

† Heb. *a man against his brother.*

† Heb. *from destroying them.*

15 ¶ Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken.

16 Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause [a] darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, *and* make *it* gross darkness.

[a] Isai. 8. 22.

17 But if ye will not hear it, my

This verse limits the application of the symbol. Only the ungodly and the idolatrous part of the people decayed at Babylon. The religious portion was strengthened and invigorated by the exile (xxiv. 5—7).

11. *For as the girdle...*] This then is the reason why the girdle was chosen as the symbol. No part of a man's dress is so completely identified with his active life, or cleaves so closely to him. Similarly Israel was the people chosen and set apart that in and by them the Holy Ghost might work for the salvation of mankind.

12. *Every bottle*] *Every* **jar.** Bottle suggests those bottles of skin spoken of in Ps. cxix. 83; Matt. ix. 17, but the word used here is the "potters' vessel," *i.e.* jar, of Isai. xxx. 14. In this verse a new symbolical action begins, but with the same meaning, the approaching destruction of Jerusalem.

13. *Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus...*] The very solemn way in which the explanation of the symbol is introduced is in striking contrast with the frivolity of the people.

the kings that sit upon David's throne] Or, *that sit* **for** *David on his throne, i.e.* his successors in general. In the fall of Jerusalem four kings in succession were crushed.

with drunkenness] Not with giddiness as of a drunken man staggering (Isai. xix. 14), but with the impotence of men whose minds are stricken with the wrath of God (Ps. lx. 3; Isai. li. 17).

14. *I will dash them one against another*] The verb is the same as that rendered *dash in pieces* in Ps. ii. 9. Hitzig regards the words as foreshadowing civil war, but there is no indication of this in the history, though probably the rivalries of contending factions may have occasioned the vacillating policy both of Jehoiakim and of Zedekiah. It need, however, mean no more than that all orders and degrees of men in the state would be broken in indiscriminate destruction. And to this one point the present symbol is confined, whereas that of the girdle taught a fuller lesson, even God's choice of Israel, His care of it, its separation from Him, and its consequent ruin.

15. *Hear ye, and give ear*] These are the words of the prophet exhorting his countrymen to give heed to the symbolic lessons just set before them.

be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken] Both the symbols were of a nature very humiliating to the national self-respect: but the prophet warns them against letting any such feeling interfere with the humble reception of the words of God.

16. *the dark mountains*] Rather, *the mountains* **of twilight.** Light is always in Scripture the symbol of holiness, and therefore of happiness, while darkness is ignorance and sin. But here there is a double metaphor. Judah is not walking upon the safe highway, but upon dangerous mountains: and already the dusk is closing round her. While then the light still serves, let her return unto her God.

and *make* it *gross darkness*] The *and* (inserted by the Kri) is incorrect. Translate, *and ye wait for light, and he turn it, i.e.* the light, *into the shadow of death, yea change it into clouded darkness.*

soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and [b] mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive.

[b] Lam. 1. 2, 16. & 2. 18.

18 Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your [l] principalities shall come down, *even* the crown of your glory.

[l] Or, *head tires.*

19 The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open *them:* Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive.

20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where *is* the flock *that* was given thee, thy beautiful flock?

21 What wilt thou say when he shall [†] punish thee? for thou hast taught them *to be* captains, *and* as chief over thee: shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail?

[†] Heb. *visit upon.*

22 ¶ And if thou say in thine heart, [c] Wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, *and* thy heels [‖] made bare.

[c] chap. 5. 19. & 16. 10.

[‖] Or, *shall be violently taken away.*

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then*

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17. *in secret places*] Or, **in secret.** Jeremiah purposes to withdraw, not merely because those who mourn love retirement, but because his ministrations must cease upon the obstinate rejection by the people of his message. Nothing would remain but to pray and weep for them in private.

the LORD's flock] Not merely those who ought to have been the Lord's flock, but those who actually were so. For the people carried away captive with Jeconiah formed the Jewish Church, as we are expressly told, whereas Zedekiah and the people of Jerusalem possessed only the externals of the Church and not its reality. It is for this reason that the seventy years' exile counts from Jeconiah's captivity.

18. *Say unto the king and to the queen*] Really, *to the* **queen-mother.** The word literally signifies *the great lady*, and is once applied to the queen-regnant (1 K. xi. 19), but usually means the queen-mother. "As the Jewish kings generally married subjects, and lived in polygamy, the king's mother took precedence of his wives" (Hitzig).

Humble yourselves, sit down] *i.e. Sit humbly down.* The Hebrew language being poor in adverbs constantly prefixes one verb to another to qualify the latter. See note on *return* in ch. xii. 15. To sit on the ground was the usual position of slaves, cp. Isai. xlvii. 1.

for your principalities] Rather, **for the ornaments of your heads,** *even the crown of your majesty, shall come down.* The word translated *principalities* is found only here, and literally means *that which belongs to your heads*, which is explained immediately as their diadems. The translation *from your heads* is untenable.

19. *The cities of the south shall be shut up*] Rather, **are shut up,** *and no man* **openeth** *them.* The usual meaning of the words is by all means to be retained, namely, that the cities of the Negeb, the southern district of Judah, are blockaded, with no one to raise the siege. From this the prophet hastens onward to the captivity, as the inevitable result of the capture of the fortified towns. Many however understand by it that the cities were blocked up with ruins, and so denuded of inhabitants that no one was left to open the gates to a stranger. It will be observed that the prophet follows in his order what would be the natural course of events. An army entering from the north would march along the Shefêlah, or fertile plain near the sea-coast, and would capture the outlying cities, before it attacked Jerusalem, situated in an almost inaccessible position among the mountains. Cp. the actual march of Sennacherib, 2 K. xviii. 13, 'Records of the Past,' I. 36—38.

Judah shall be...] Translate, *Judah* **is** *carried away captive all of it.*

20. *Lift up your eyes*] The verb *lift up* is fem., and must belong either to the queen-mother, which the sense does not admit of—for the nation could not be her flock—or to Jerusalem, though not mentioned by name till *v.* 27. She is asked where the cities, which once lay grouped round her, like a goodly flock of sheep, are gone? The question implies blame. It was the example of Jerusalem which had led the cities of Judah into sin (see Micah i. 5), and brought upon them an invading army. On the north see ch. i. 14.

21. *What wilt thou say...*] This verse should be translated, *What wilt thou say,* O Jerusalem, *when he,* Jehovah, *shall set over thee for head those whom thou hast taught to be thy bosom friends?* For the verb *set over* see note on *Pakîd*, ch. i. 10. See Note at end of Chapter.

22. *thy heels made bare*] Rather, **ill-used,** *treated with violence.* The idea of the A. V. is taken from the first clause. The long flowing robes (שׁוּל) is a *train* rather than a

† Heb. *taught.*

may ye also do good, that are †accustomed to do evil.

24 Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness.

25 This *is* thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood.

26 Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear.

27 I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, *and* thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? †when *shall it* once *be?* † Heb. *after when yet?*

skirt), worn by ladies of rank, are to be laid aside, but the object of this was that they might do menial work, bare-legged like slaves. The ill-using of the heels is not therefore the tearing off the sandals with violence (Henderson), nor the loading the feet with chains (C. B. Michaelis), but the having to tramp barefoot, a thing very painful to women used to the seclusion of the female apartments. This exposure consequent upon being degraded to menial labour became a metaphor expressive of the greatest ignominy. See Isai. xlvii. 2; Ezek. xxiii. 29; Nahum iii. 5.

23. *Can the Ethiopian...*] This is an answer to the implied question, may not Judah avert this calamity by repentance? No: because her sins are too inveterate. By the Ethiopian, Hebr. *Cushite*, is meant not the Cushite of Arabia, but of Africa, *i.e.* the negro.

24. *Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble*] The word means not what we call stubble, but the broken straw which had to be separated from the wheat after the corn had been trampled out by the oxen. Sometimes it was burnt as useless; at other times left to be blown away by the wind coming from the desert, on which see ch. iv. 11; Job i. 19.

25. *the portion of thy measures*] *i.e. thy measured portion.* This translation depends upon Job xi. 9, where, however, the word translated *measure* may be a contracted form (מדתה for מדתה). Everywhere else it means either an *upper garment*, or a *carpet*, such as nobles in the East sat upon (Judg. v. 10, where see note). The first would give a suitable meaning, *the portion of thy lap*, the upper garment being constantly used for holding things (Ruth iii. 15; 2 K. iv. 39; Prov. xvi. 33).

in falsehood] *i.e.* in idols, see ch. x. 14.

26. *Therefore will I*] The Hebrew is, *And I also*, upon which Calvin remarks that the formula always implies something mutual, as much as to say, I also must have my turn, I too must retaliate.

upon thy face] The threat is taken word for word from Nahum iii. 5.

27. and *thine abominations*] **Even** *thy abominations.* In this verse the prophet sums up the three charges against Judah, of spiritual adultery, of inordinate eagerness after idolatry (see note on ch. v. 7, and cp. ii. 24), and of shameless participation in heathen orgies.

in the fields] Hebr. *in the* **field**, the open, uninclosed country, see ch. vi. 25, xii. 4.

wilt thou not...] The last words of the verse are, *thou wilt not be cleansed after how long yet!* These words explain the teaching of *v.* 23. Repentance was not an actual, but a moral impossibility, and after a long time Judah was to be cleansed. It was to return from exile penitent and forgiven.

NOTE on CHAP. XIII. 21.

The translation of this verse depends upon the meaning of *alluf*. The idea that it means *captains*, to which Gesenius adhered, comes from a wrong derivation, by which it is connected with *elef*, in the sense of a thousand, and so is supposed to signify the captain of a thousand, a chiliarch. The sense in which it comes from *elef* is that of a clan, and so it means a *tribal chief* in Gen. xxxvi. 15, where see note. It is used in the same sense in Zech. ix. 7. More frequently *alluf* means a member of the same family or class, and so a familiar friend, see Prov. xvi. 28; Micah vii. 5; cp. note on Ps. lv. 13. See also note on ch. xi. 19, where it means *tame, domesticated.* As the Babylonians could not possibly be tribal chiefs to Judah, and there is no authority for the general sense of *princes*, this secondary sense of the word *'alluf* alone remains. How great then will be Judah's anguish when those foreign powers, whose friendship she has been courting, become her tyrants!

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *The grievous famine* 7 *causeth Jeremiah to pray.* 10 *The Lord will not be intreated for the people.* 13 *Lying prophets are no excuse for them.* 17 *Jeremiah is moved to complain for them.*

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning † the dearth.

† Heb. *the words of the dearths*, or, *restraints.*

2 Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.

3 And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, *and* found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.

4 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook *it*, because there was no grass.

6 And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because *there was* no grass.

JEREMIAH'S EIGHTH PROPHECY.

Chaps. xiv., xv.

The Drought.

The occasion of this prophecy, which so frankly lays open to us the workings of Jeremiah's mind, was a drought, the terrible effects of which are described with much force. When it was written is uncertain, but certainly it was after Jeremiah had long discharged the duties of his office, for he speaks of himself as an acknowledged prophet (xv. 16), who had become the object of general scorn and ill treatment (*v.* 10), and what was worse, who was himself disappointed at the ill success of his labours (*v.* 18). Probably therefore it belongs to the early years of Jehoiakim, when Jeremiah saw all the efforts of Josiah's reign utterly frustrated. The prophecy takes the form of a dialogue, in which the prophet intercedes for Judah, points out her difficulties, and makes excuses for her conduct: but the answer ever shews, that her sin has been too obstinately persisted in for pardon to be possible. Convinced that all his efforts are in vain, and his entreaties rejected, he then breaks out into bitter complaints, but is finally comforted by the promise of God's presence to strengthen and deliver him.

CHAP. XIV. 1. The title literally is, *That which was the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah*, and so ch. i. 2, xlvi. 1, xlvii. 1, xlix. 34.

the dearth] Really, **the drought**. See ch. xvii. 8.

2. *the gates thereof*] As the gates were the usual places of concourse, the misery of the people would there shew itself most plainly.

they are black unto the ground] *down to the ground, i.e.* the people assembled at the gates are in deep mourning and sit humbly on the ground: cp. Ps. cxxxvii. 1; Isai. xlvii. 1, and note on ch. xiii. 18.

3. *their little ones*] Not their children or servants, but *their* **mean ones**, the common people. The word is peculiar to Jeremiah, occurring only here and in ch. xlviii. 4. The Masorites have substituted for it a commonplace form.

the pits] *i.e.* tanks for holding water, see 2 K. iii. 16, where the people were to dig them in readiness for a supply.

they...covered their heads] The sign of a grief so great that a man can only bear it alone (2 S. xv. 30, xix. 4).

4. *the ground is chapt*] Rather, **is dismayed**. None of the versions support the A. V. in its very matter-of-fact rendering, though it is approved by several commentators. Really, *the ground* is used metaphorically for the people who till the ground, just as the gates in *v.* 2 mean the people who sit in the gates.

for there was no rain in the earth] *i.e. in the* **land**. The same words occur verbatim in the Hebr. in 1 K. xvii. 7.

5. *Yea, the hind*] Or, **For** *the hind*. There is no reason to take the particle here in any except its usual causal sense. What is said gives a reason why those who till the ground are in despair. Bochart, P. 1, lib. III. 17, quotes passages from the ancients in which the hind is praised for its tender care of its young.

6. *in the high places*] *i.e. on the bare hill-tops* (ch. iii. 2), the favourite haunt of these animals.

like dragons] *Like* **jackals** (ch. ix. 11). As the point of the comparison is not obvious, Hitzig and Graf take *tannim*, jackals, to mean *tannin*, crocodiles, or any similar great water reptile. But, as Nägelsb. observes, the open wolf-like jaws of the jackal panting from thirst is as good a metaphor as the gaping mouth of a crocodile.

their eyes did fail, because there was *no grass*] The keen sight of the wild ass is well known, but they look round in vain, not for grass: it is a different word from that used in *v.* 5, and

7 ¶ O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou *it* for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

8 O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man *that* turneth aside to tarry for a night?

9 Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man *that* cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, *art* in the midst of us, and † we are called by thy name; leave us not.

† Heb. *thy name is called upon us.*

10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins.

11 Then said the LORD unto me, [a] Pray not for this people for *their* good.

12 [b] When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

[a] Exod. 32. 10. chap. 7. 16. & 11. 14.

[b] Prov. 1. 28. Isai. 1. 15. chap. 11. 11. Ezek. 8. 18. Micah 3. 4.

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means *bushes, shrubs*, and should be translated herb as in Gen. i. 11.

7. *O LORD...*] The description of the drought is followed by the prophet's first intercessory prayer, *vv.* 7—9.

do thou it] Rather, deal *thou, act thou for thy name's sake, i.e.* not according to the strict measure of right and wrong, but as a God who has proclaimed Himself merciful and gracious. The *name* in the Hebrew idiom is the reality.

8. *a stranger in the land*] As none but the citizens in old time had any political rights or privileges, a sojourner, however long might be his stay, naturally took little interest in the country where not choice but necessity had made him fix his dwelling.

as a wayfaring man that *turneth aside to tarry for a night*] Or, *as a wayfaring man that pitcheth his tent to tarry for a night.* The verb means simply to stretch out, expand, and *tent* has to be supplied. The word for *go aside, turn aside*, is quite different, cp. ch. xv. 5. Travellers to this day in Palestine must carry their tents with them.

9. *as a man astonied*] The word occurs only here, and the versions give us no aid, the Vulg. rendering it *vagus*, the Syr. *feeble*, and the LXX. having a different reading, נִרְדָּם, *slumbering*, which is probably right. The reading in the Hebr. text has been explained by most commentators since the days of A. Schultens by the aid of the Arabic verb *dahama, to take by surprise*, or *unawares* (Lane). It thus may possibly mean *one who is taken by surprise and loses his presence of mind.*

leave us not] Lit. *lay us not down.* Jeremiah evidently had in mind the magnificent words of Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

10. *Thus saith...*] In this and the two following verses we have Jehovah's rejection of Jeremiah's prayer. The answer is addressed to the people because the prophet had prayed as the nation's representative.

Thus have they loved to wander] The word rendered *thus* means *just so*, but it is difficult to see the point of comparison. Rashi suggests the most tenable exposition, "Do not intercede: for as determined as I am to punish them, just so they love to continue their offence." The other chief interpretations are that of Nägelsb., Just like the thirsty hind and the wild asses, so my people love to wander after idols: and that of Graf, To the same degree that Jehovah has estranged Himself from them (see *vv.* 8, 9), so have they estranged themselves from Him. But their estrangement came first, and was the cause why God left them.

therefore the LORD...] This half of the verse is quoted verbatim from Hos. viii. 13, and should be translated:

And *Jehovah hath no pleasure in them:*
Now will He *remember their iniquity and visit their sins.*

The force lies in the word *now*. The complaint was that Jehovah did not interfere to save His people: the answer, that the time has come when they must be punished, and interference in their behalf is out of the question.

12. *their cry*] *i.e.* prayer offered aloud, see note on vii. 16.

an oblation] **A meat-offering**, the minchah, on which see Lev. ii. 1.

by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence] The two latter ever follow upon the track of the first (cp. Ezek. v. 12), and by these God will consume them, yet so as to leave a remnant (ch. iv. 27). It is not necessary to say with Keil that the fast and sacrifices were rejected because they were heartless formalities. There would be those whom the chastisement had brought to repentance;

13 ¶ Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you † assured peace in this place.

† Heb. *peace of truth.*

14 Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: [c] I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.

[c] chap. 23. 21. & 27. 15. & 29. 8, 9.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

17 ¶ Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; [d] Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

[d] chap. 13. 17. Lam. 1. 16. & 2. 18.

18 If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with fa-

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and the lesson is a sterner one. There is a time when the most genuine repentance avails nothing to avert the temporal consequences of sin. But the chastisement, which crushes those who harden themselves against it, only purifies the penitent.

13. *Then said I, Ah, Lord* GOD!] Or, **Alas**, *my Lord Jehovah!* See ch. i. 6. Jeremiah referred here to a real difficulty. The false prophets in his days were so numerous and influential as to counteract and almost nullify the influence of the true prophet. We find in Isaiah the first indications of the internal decay of the prophetic order; but Micah, his contemporary, coming to Jerusalem from his remote village of Moresheth, was so struck by it that he denounces the false prophets in the strongest terms (Micah iii. 5, 11). In Jeremiah's time they seem to have been all-powerful. But the secret of their power was "my people love to have it so" (ch. v. 31).

14. *divination*] *i.e. conjuring*, the abuse of the occult and less understood powers of nature, wherever it is not a mere cheat. It was strictly forbidden to all Jews, Deut. xviii. 10.

a thing of nought] The Heb. *elil* (so the Kri) is probably a diminutive of *el*, God, and signifies a small idol made of the more precious metals (Isai. ii. 20, xix. 3, xxxi. 7). But as the Jews habitually called idols *vanity*, *falsehood*, and the like, the word *elil* soon suggested a derivation from the negative particle *al*, *not*, and there are two places where it has the secondary meaning of worthlessness, Job xiii. 4 and Zech. xi. 17, in the latter of which, however, the A.V. has *idol-shepherd*. The word in the written text is *elul*, and may signify an oracle given by an *elil*. The false prophets are thus described as deceiving the people in three ways: (1) by asserting that they had seen a vision; (2) by using conjuring tricks; (3) by professing to consult these small idols, in the same way that they divined by the Teraphim (cp. Zech. x. 2, where these three methods of divination occur again, only the Teraphim take the place of the Elilim. Probably they were much the same). All these three methods the prophet declares to be *the deceit of their heart*, *i.e.* not self-deceit, but a fraud suggested by their heart or mind, *i.e.* a wilful and intentional fraud.

16. *their wickedness*] Not *their evil*, as some translate. Their chastisement was simply their wickedness in its results, *i.e.* their wickedness brought home to them.

17. *Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them*] As no word of God follows, Ewald and others connect this clause with what precedes. Ewald even further suggests that a clause may be lost. But the formula with which the words are introduced never means "the above prediction," and really this description of the prophet's feelings involves a message from God to the effect that the calamity would be so overwhelming as to cause perpetual weeping; only it is set before the people under the more lively representation of Jeremiah's own sorrow.

the virgin daughter of my people] The epithet testifies to God's previous care of Judah. She had been as jealously guarded, and kept as secluded from other nations, as virgins are in an oriental household, cp. Song of Sol. iv. 12.

a very grievous blow] See ch. x. 19.

18. *behold them that are sick with famine!*]

mine! yea, both the prophet and the priest ‖ go about into a land that they know not.

‖ Or, *make merchandise against a land, and* men *acknowledge it not,* chap. 5. 31.

19 Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul lothed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and *there is* no healing for us? [e] we looked for peace, and *there is* no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!

[e] chap. 8. 15.

20 We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, *and* the iniquity of our fathers: for [f] we have sinned against thee.

[f] Psal. 106. 6. Dan. 9. 8.

21 Do not abhor *us*, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us.

22 Are there *any* among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? *art* not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these *things*.

Lit. *behold the sicknesses of famine*, the sicknesses occasioned by want of food.

both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not] *i.e.* they must go into exile in a strange land. So the LXX. and Vulg.; but see Note at end of Chapter.

19. *Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?*] Undeterred by the former refusal to listen to his prayers the prophet pours forth a second earnest intercession, acknowledging the wickedness of the nation, *v.* 20, but appealing to the covenant, *v.* 21, and to God's almighty power, *v.* 22.

hath thy soul lothed Zion?] The more exact meaning of the verb is to *throw away as worthless*.

we looked...] Repeated from ch. viii. 15.

20. *our wickedness*, and *the iniquity of our fathers*] The *and* is not in the Hebrew, and corrupts the sense. National sin is the sin of the fathers, perpetuated generation after generation by the children. When thus successive opportunities for repentance have been rejected —for each generation has its own probation— the nation is ripe for chastisement. See note on ch. ii. 9.

21. *Do not abhor* us] The verse is much more emphatic in the original, where it is a series of broken ejaculations: *Abhor not for thy name's sake! Disgrace not the throne of thy glory! Remember! Break not thy covenant with us!* As Jeremiah can plead no change in the temper of the people, he appeals to God's attributes, see *v.* 7. *Disgrace* means literally *treat as a fool, as a Nabal*, 1 S. xxv. 25; 2 S. iii. 33. It is the verb rendered *lightly esteemed* in Deut. xxxii. 15. The throne of Jehovah's glory is Jerusalem.

22. *that can cause rain*] Not a general appeal, as in ch. v. 24, x. 13, but specifically, none of the idols of the Gentiles can put an end to this present distress.

art *not thou he, O LORD our God?*] Rather, *art thou not Jehovah our God?* The pronoun *he* is the Hebr. copula.

thou hast made all these things] *i.e.* the heaven with its showers, &c. (Rosenm.). Hence the appeal to Jehovah in the previous clause.

NOTE on CHAP. XIV. 18.

The last clause of this verse is capable of very different renderings, as may be seen by the margin of the A.V. Literally it is, *for both prophet and priest go about into a land and know not.* The rendering of the A.V. in the marg., *make merchandise*, is taken from the Targ., but arises from the mistaken translation of (1) Gen. xxxiv. 10, where סחרוה is *traverse it*, go up and down the land with your flocks; and (2) ib. xlii. 34, where ואת הארץ תסחרו means *and ye shall have the right of traversing the land*, shall have a safe conduct for going to and fro. The participle סוחר often means a *trader*, as being one ever going about with his wares, and so a pedlar in Latin is *circuitor;* but the sons of Jacob were not traders. As סחר, *to go about*, means in the cognate dialects *to beg*, Graf suggests that it may mean here *they shall go as beggars into a strange land.* Rosenm., Umbreit, &c., translate, *they wander about in the land and know not what to do:* and to much the same effect Maurer, Ewald, &c., *they wander into the country and know nothing*, have no knowledge or advice to give; but Hitz., *they move into a land which they know not.* This virtually agrees with the rendering of the A.V., which is simplest and best.

CHAPTER XV.

1 The utter rejection and manifold judgments of the Jews. 10 Jeremiah, complaining of their spite, receiveth a promise for himself, 12 and a threatening for them. 15 He prayeth, 19 and receiveth a gracious promise.

THEN said the LORD unto me, [a] Though [b] Moses and [c] Samuel stood before me, *yet* my mind *could* not *be* toward this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth.

[a] Ezek. 14. 14.
[b] Exod. 32. 11, 12.
[c] 1 Sam. 7. 9.

2 And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; [d] Such as *are* for death, to death; and such as *are* for the sword, to the sword; and such as *are* for the famine, to the famine; and such as *are* for the captivity, to the captivity.

[d] chap. 43. 11. Zech. 11. 9.

3 And I will [e] appoint over them four [†] kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

[e] Lev. 26. 16.
[†] Heb. *families.*

4 And [†] I will cause them to be [f] removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of [g] Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for *that* which he did in Jerusalem.

[†] Heb. *I will give them for a removing.*
[f] Deut. 28. 25. chap. 24. 9.
[g] 2 Kin. 21. 11.

5 For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside [†] to ask how thou doest?

[†] Heb. *to ask of thy peace?*

6 Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.

7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave *them* of [‖] children, I will destroy my people, *since* they return not from their ways.

[‖] Or, *whatsoever is dear.*

8 Their widows are increased to

CHAP. XV. **1.** *Though Moses and Samuel...*] The intercession of the prophet meets with a more decided refusal in this strophe, *vv.* 1—9, than in ch. xiv. 11, 12. Moses and Samuel are mentioned as the great mediators, whose intercession had been accepted in old times (Exod. xxxii. 11—14; Num. xiv. 13—20; 1 S. vii. 9, xii. 23; Ps. xcix. 6).

cast them *out of my sight*] Rather, **send them out of my presence**, *and let them go away.* While Moses and Samuel enter the Holy Place to make their intercession the people are supposed to be assembled in Jehovah's presence, *i.e.* in the forecourt of the temple, awaiting the answer. But the prophet is to send them away, *i.e.* dismiss them, because their mediators intercede in vain.

2. *Such as* are *for death*] *i.e.* their going forth means not simple banishment, but their being taken as criminals to execution. Cp. ch. xliii. 11.

3. *And I will appoint* (**set**) *over them four kinds*] Lit. *families, i.e.* classes of things. The first is to destroy the living, the other three to mutilate and consume the dead.

to tear] Lit. *to drag along the ground.* Cp. the use of the verb in 2 S. xvii. 13, where it is rendered *We will draw the city with ropes.* It thus forcibly expresses the contumely to which the bodies of the slain will be exposed.

4. *I will cause them to be removed*] Rather, *I will cause them to be* **a terror.** See note on Isai. xxviii. 19. So the Syriac and Rashi render, *Every one who hears of the calamity that has befallen them will tremble.* The words are quoted from Deut. xxviii. 25.

because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah] The name of the pious father intensifies the horror at the wickedness of the son, 2 K. xxi. 3.

5. *who shall have pity upon thee...?*] The utter want of sympathy for Judah described in this verse arises from her being a *terror*, something which fills all mankind with alarm.

who shall go aside] See note on ch. xiv. 8.

6. *Thou hast forsaken me*] The Hebrew verb, though usually translated *forsake* in the A. V., has really the stronger sense of casting away and rejecting. This verse gives the reason of the refusal of Jehovah to hear the prophet's intercession. The punishment due has been delayed unto wearisomeness, and this seeming failure of justice has made Judah withdraw further from God.

7. *I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land*] Or, **I have** *winnowed them with a winnowing shovel. The gates of the land* mean the places by which men enter or leave it. As God winnows them they are driven out of the land through all its outlets in every direction. Jeremiah took the phrase from Nahum iii. 13.

I will bereave] Rather, **I have** *bereaved*, **I have** *destroyed my people.* The words inserted in the A. V., *of children*, are not required.

since *they return not...*] Rather, *from their ways they have not returned.* The position of

me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them ‖against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

‖ Or, *against the mother* city *a young man spoiling, &c.* or, *against the mother* and *the young men.*

9 She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; [h] her sun is gone down while *it was* yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

[h] Amos 8. 9

10 ¶ [i] Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me.

[i] Job 3. 1, &c. chap. 20. 15.

11 The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily ‖I will cause the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

‖ Or, *I will intreat the enemy for thee.*

12 Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?

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this clause in the parallelism shews that it answers to *I am weary with repenting* in *v.* 6. Both are introduced sharply without any conjunction, and mutually explain one another.

8. *I have brought upon them...*] This clause should be translated, *I have brought upon them, even upon the mother of the young* **man**, *a spoiler at noonday* (so the Vulgate, Kimchi, &c.). The word rendered *young man* means a picked warrior, and as we have in the next verse, *the mother who has borne seven*, so here it is the mother who has borne a valiant champion. But neither his prowess nor the numerous offspring of the other can avail to save those who gave them birth; war bereaves both alike. Other translations are, *upon mother and young man* (Syr., &c.); *upon the mother city a young man spoiling* (marg. of A. V., following Rashi).

at noonday] *i.e.* unexpectedly, as armies used to rest at noon, see ch. vi. 4.

I have caused him...] Rather, *I have brought suddenly upon* **her**, the mother of the young warrior, **anguish** *and terrors.* (So the LXX. and Syr., *i.e.* they took עִיר as an Aramaic form of צִיר.)

9. *she hath been ashamed*] Or, *is ashamed.* To a Hebrew mother children were a glory, and to be childless a disgrace.

Many consider that these three verses refer to the battle of Megiddo, and depict the consternation of Jerusalem at that sad event. If so, in the sun going down while it was day, *v.* 9, there will be a reference to the eclipse on Sept. 30, B.C. 610.

10. *Woe is me, my mother*] In this verse Jeremiah vents his sorrow at the rejection of his prayer. He would prefer never to have been born than be compelled unceasingly to predict an evil from which there was no escape, and pray for mercy without being heard. In reading these bitter words and similar expostulations in ch. iv. 10, viii. 21, xii. 1, xx. 7, 14—18, we feel that we have to do, not with a man who was playing a part, but with one who was the reluctant minister of a higher power, whence alone he drew strength finally to master his wounded feelings and be content to do and suffer.

a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth] *Strife* here more exactly means a *lawsuit*, and thus the Syriac gives the right sense in rendering, *a man who has to enter into judgment with and reprove the whole earth.*

I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury] *i.e.* I have no personal cause of quarrel with the people, that I should thus be perpetually at strife with them. The relations between the money-lender and the debtor were in old time the most fruitful source of lawsuits and quarrelling.

every one of them doth curse me] See Note at end of Chapter.

11. *The LORD said*] This formula is found elsewhere only in ch. xlvi. 25, the usual phrase in all the prophets being, *Thus saith Jehovah.*

Verily it shall be well with thy remnant] The C'tib is, *Verily* **thy loosing shall be for good**; the Kri, *Verily I have loosed thee for good.* The verb is found elsewhere in the Bible only in Job xxxvii. 3, where it may signify *the setting the lightning loose:* but in the Targ. it occurs in Jer. xl. 4 as the equivalent of the verb *I set thee loose* from chains. The rendering of the A. V., *thy remnant*, gives an untrue sense. It would mean all the rest of Jeremiah's days, which were by no means days of happiness. Nor had he even at last a period of tranquillity. But *thy loosing* means thy being set free, thy deliverance, and this sense is satisfactory.

I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well...] Rather, *I will cause the enemy* **to supplicate thee** *in the time of evil*, &c. This was fulfilled in ch. xxi. 1, 2, xxxvii. 3, xlii. 2.

12. *Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?*] The last word is an oversight; it should be **brass**, *i.e.* bronze. By the iron is meant Jeremiah's intercession; but this cannot alter the divine purpose to send Judah into exile, which is firm as steel and brass. The other

13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the [k] spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a [l] fire is kindled in mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you.

15 ¶ O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

16 Thy words were found, and I did [m] eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of

[k] chap. 17. 3.
[l] Deut. 32. 22.
[m] Ezek. 3. 3. Rev. 10. 9.

interpretations given to the metaphor are so numerous, that a few only can be mentioned. Umbreit following Rashi explains it of Jeremiah; "Can trouble and affliction, though hard as iron, break one who, like Jeremiah, is firm as steel and brass?" Ewald of the "northern colossus of the Chaldæan empire," which not even iron, much less the Jews, could resist. Others, by northern iron, *i.e.* the steel made by the Chalybes on the Pontus, understand the obduracy of the Jews, which not even iron could break. Henderson translates, *Can one break iron, the iron of the north and brass?* explaining it like Ewald of the Chaldees. But his argument, that brass is softer than iron, is a mistake. The ancients applied the term to any alloy of copper, but especially to a mixture of copper and tin, of which they made their cutting implements, and which is far harder than ordinary iron, and is thus used in Scripture as a metaphor for extreme hardness. Graf rejects *v.* 11 as a gloss, and renders, "Can I, Jeremiah, even if I be iron, break the obduracy of the people hard as steel or brass?" Lastly the Targum takes the iron as meaning Pharaoh-Necho, while Nebuchadnezzar is the steel and brass. But the only interpretation which harmonizes with the context is that given above. For *brass* see note on Exod. xxv. 3. The alloy of copper and zinc now called brass was entirely unknown to the ancients.

13. *Thy substance*...] This and the following verse appear again in ch. xvii. 3, 4, with several slight, and one or two important, differences, as for instance, the substitution of *without price* in this verse for *thy high places*; but it is a mistaken criticism that would reduce the two passages to exact agreement, as it was neither obligatory upon Jeremiah, nor was it his practice, to quote himself verbatim.

Jeremiah is personally addressed in the verse—*thy substance* &c.—because he stood before God as the intercessor, representing the people. As such, three things are said to him, (1) that God would give Judah's treasures away for nothing. It is an act of contempt, implying that He did not value them. (2) The cause of this contempt is Judah's sins. (3) This is justified by the extent of those sins. Judah has committed them everywhere, throughout her whole land.

14. *And I will make* thee *to pass with thine enemies into a land*...] Render, *And I will make thee serve thine enemies in a land thou knewest not.* See Note at end of Chapter.

for a fire is kindled in mine anger] This clause is quoted from Deut. xxxii. 22. The added words shew that the punishment then predicted is about to be fulfilled.

15. *O* LORD...] In this strophe, *vv.* 15—18, the prophet, though recognizing that the fall of Judah is inevitable, as shewn in *vv.* 12—14, and that he cannot escape the hard lot of having to predict the ruin of his country as a purpose absolutely determined, yet offers unto God a last expostulation, and that in a tone of reproach, as if the promises made in ch. i. 18 had not been fulfilled. He contrasts the joy with which he had accepted his office, *v.* 16, with the present revulsion of his feelings, *v.* 17, and prays for more evident help, *v.* 18. It is the prayer of a man in bitter grief, whose human nature cannot at present submit to the divine will.

thou knowest...] The prophet's words are full of intense meaning. He appeals to God, the all-knowing (who was acquainted therefore with the manner of his call, the promises made him, the hopes with which he had accepted his office, his disappointment, his dangers, the opposition he had met with, and his perseverance even when in despair), to shew that He remembered him by visiting him, *i.e.* by interfering in some marked manner in his behalf, and punishing his persecutors. God's long-suffering towards the wicked seemed to the prophet to be the abandonment of himself to death, and justice itself required that one who was suffering contumely for God's sake should be delivered.

rebuke] *i.e.* **reproach**, contumely.

16. *Thy words were found*] In Hebr. the verb *to find* is used in a very general sense for anything obtained without labour, or offered without being sought for on the receiver's part, cp. Ezek. iii. 1. It thus signifies that Jeremiah's summons to the prophetic office had not been expected or sought for by him.

I did eat them] *i.e.* I received them with joy, cp. Ezek. ii. 8, iii. 1—3. This eating of the divine words expresses also the close union between that which came from God and the prophet's own being, and accounts for the

mine heart: for † I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

† Heb. *thy name is called upon me.*

17 I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my [n] pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, *and as* waters *that* † fail?

[n] chap. 30. 15.

† Heb. *be not sure?*

19 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, *and* thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen [o] wall: and they shall fight against thee, but [p] they shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

[o] chap. 1. 18. & 6. 27. [p] chap. 20. 11.

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

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manner in which often, when he has begun to speak in Jehovah's name, he continues the message in his own words, without any mark of distinction.

I am called by thy name] Lit. *for thy name is called upon me, i.e.* I am consecrated to Thy service, am ordained to be Thy prophet.

17. *I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced*] Rather, *I sat not in the assembly of the* **laughers**, *and was merry.* No one ought to sit in an assembly of mockers, but Jeremiah, who was very young when called to be a prophet, and who doubtless had often taken part before in many a merry meeting (on מוֹד see note on ch. vi. 11), says that from the time God's words came to him he abstained from things innocent, and that a gravity came over him beyond his years. Cp. ch. xvi. 2.

I sat alone because of thy hand] As a person *consecrated* to God he would also be *separated;* see on this connection of ideas ch. i. 5, and cp. Acts xiii. 2; Gal. i. 15.

for thou hast filled me with indignation] The prophet thus taught of God sees the sins of the people in a more heinous light, as offences against God, and as involving the ruin of His Church.

18. *Why is my pain perpetual*] *i.e.* Are all my labours to be in vain? Will the delivery of Thy message avail nothing towards changing this miserable state of things?

as a liar...] Really, *as a* **deceitful** *brook,* a brook which flows only in the winter, the opposite of *the perennial stream* of Amos v. 24. See note on Job vi. 15. Jeremiah had expected that, called to so high an office, there would be a perpetual interference of providence in his behalf, instead whereof things seemed to take only their natural course.

19. *If thou return...*] There is in God's answer a mingling of comfort and reproof. Jeremiah as in ch. xii. had questioned God's righteousness; he is told *If thou return,* if thou repent thee of thy doubts, and think only of thy duty, *then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me, i.e. then will I* **cause thee again** *to stand before me.* To stand before a person means to be his chief officer or vicegerent, and is said of Elijah (1 K. xvii. 1), and Elisha (2 K. iii. 14), as God's prophets; of David as Saul's minister (1 S. xvi. 21, 22); of Solomon's counsellors (1 K. xii. 6); of Nebuzar-adan, as commander-in-chief of Nebuchadnezzar's army, Jer. lii. 12 marg. It implies therefore the restoration of Jeremiah to the prophetic office.

if thou take forth the precious from the vile] *i.e.* if thou cause the precious metal to come forth from the dross. The application of the metaphor is much disputed, but we may dismiss all explanations which do not refer the words to the prophet's own state of mind. This leaves only that of Maurer, who says that Jeremiah was to separate in himself what was divine and holy from the dross of human passion. Let him abandon this attitude of mistrust, this sensitiveness, this idea that God does not deal righteously with him, and then *he shall be as God's mouth, i.e.* as the organ by which God speaks.

let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them] Rather, **they shall** *return unto thee, but* **thou shalt** *not return unto them.* A flattering prophet perishes with the people whom his soft speeches have confirmed in their sin: but the truthful speaking of God's word saves both.

20. *And I will*] This verse repeats and confirms the promises given in ch. i. 18, 19. In the last clause of *v.* 18 Jeremiah had thrown doubts upon them.

21. *out of the hand of the terrible*] In this second clause the word for *hand* is the *palm,* or *hollow of the hand,* on which see ch. xii. 7. *The terrible* means men who act with open violence, see Job xv. 20; Ps. xxxvii. 35; Isai. xiii. 11, xxv. 4, xxix. 5, in all which places the Hebr. word is the same.

NOTES on CHAP. XV. 10, 11, 14.

10. The Hebr. בלה מקללוני, which the Rabbins endeavour to explain by supposing a confusion of the verbs קלל and קלה, is now generally regarded as a wrong division of the letters. It should be בלהם קללוני. The form בֶּלְהֶם for בֶּלֶם is unusual, but cp. בֶּלְבֶם, Deut. i. 22; בֶּלְהֵם, 2 S. xxiii. 6. Ewald's emendation בָּלָה מְקַלְלַנְנִי, though grammatically possible, is yet contrary to analogy.

11. The C'tib שרותך is capable of several renderings according to the vowels supplied. It may be (1) שְׁרוּתְךָ inf. Pa. of שרה, which Ges. renders *thy beginning;* but there is no proof of this meaning in Hebr., it rather means *thy loosing.* In Chaldee and Syriac however שְׁרָא in Pa. is both to unloose and to begin. Or (2) שְׁרוֹתְךָ inf. Kal of the same verb, and which would also mean *thy loosing.* Or (3) שְׁרוֹתְךָ inf. Pi. of שָׁרַר *thy fighting*, thy struggle with the Jews, *shall be for good.* Or (4) שְׁרִיתְךָ 1st pers. Kal of the same verb, which Ewald and others take in the sense of strengthening, = Syr. ܫܪܝ *I strengthen thee for good.* Both these last expositions are drawn from the cognate dialects, and need confirmation from the Hebrew. Probably from this difficulty of interpretation the Masorites substituted as the Kri שְׁרִיתְךָ, *I have loosed thee;* but St Jerome and some of the Jews mistook this for שְׁאֵרִיתְךָ = שְׁרִיתְךָ, *thy remnant*, whence the rendering of the A. V.

14. Neither the rendering of the A.V., nor that of Keil, *I cause thy enemies to bring it*, thy treasure, *into a land...*, is a legitimate translation of the Hebr., which is, *I will cause thy enemies to pass through in a land thou knowest not:* but the LXX., Syr., and Targ., with many MSS., have the same reading (והעברתיך) as in ch. xvii. 4, and the grammar requires this, as to pass *into* a land is not בארץ, but אל ארץ.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The prophet, under the types of abstaining from marriage, from houses of mourning and feasting, foresheweth the utter ruin of the Jews,* 10 *because they were worse than their fathers.* 14 *Their return from captivity shall be stranger than their deliverance out of Egypt.* 16 *God will doubly recompense their idolatry.*

THE word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.

3 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;

JEREMIAH'S NINTH PROPHECY.

Chaps. xvi., xvii. 1—18.

Punishment of Judah by Pestilence and Exile.

CHAP. XVI. In this prophecy the punishment of the people is set forth in even sterner terms than in the last. The whole land is likened to a desert covered with the bodies of the dead, who lie unbemoaned and uncared for; and the prophet himself is commanded to abstain from the common usages of mankind that his mode of life, as well as his words, may warn the people of the greatness of the approaching calamity. There is, however, finally to be a return from exile, but only after the idolatry of the nation has been severely punished. In the latter part of the prophecy, many commentators find allusions to the tyrannical conduct of Jehoiakim (ch. xvii. 5), his alliance with Egypt, *v.* 7, his avarice, and his premature death, *v.* 11. They are all, however, too general and uncertain to entitle us to say that the date of the prophecy is subsequent to the death of that king, though probably it was written about the close of his reign. But see note on ch. xvii. 15.

2. *Thou shalt not take thee a wife*] As marriage was obligatory upon the Jews, the prohibition of it to Jeremiah was a sign that the impending calamity was so great as to override all ordinary duties, and justify him in foregoing those hopes which in the mind of every Jew were connected with the possession of children.

in this place] Not Jerusalem only, but the whole of Judæa. Cp. ch. vii. 3.

3. *concerning the sons...*] This reason extends to the whole of the people. The times were such that for "the present distress" it was wise for all to abstain from marriage, 1 Cor. vii. 26; Matt. xxiv. 19. It is extraordinary that this passage should ever have been dragged into the controversy respecting the enforced celibacy of the clergy, but such has been the case; and it was evidently thought a matter of importance by the translators of the A. V. to represent that Jeremiah really

4 They shall die of [a] grievous deaths; they shall not [b] be lamented; neither shall they be buried; *but* they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their [c] carcases shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

5 For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the house of ‖ mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.

6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor [d] cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them:

7 Neither shall *men* ‖ tear *themselves* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother.

8 Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink.

9 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, [e] I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

10 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, [f] Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

11 Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served

[a] chap. 15. 2. [b] chap. 25. 33. [c] Psal. 79. 2. chap. 7. 33. & 34. 20. ‖ Or, *mourning feast.* [d] Lev. 19. 28. Deut. 14. 1. ‖ Or, *break bread for them,* as Ezek. 24. 17. [e] Isai. 24. 7, 8. chap. 7. 34. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. [f] chap. 5. 19. & 13. 22.

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was married. For in the heading of the chapter we read, "The prophet under the *types* of abstaining from marriage, &c." There can be little doubt that Jeremiah actually was unmarried, but the very force of the sign lay in its being an exception to the ordinary practice of the prophets.

4. *grievous deaths*] Lit. *deaths of diseases*, deaths by those many maladies which follow in the track of war and famine; cp. ch. xiv. 18.

they shall not be lamented] Similarly in the plagues of Athens and London, the greatness of the general misery crushed out the gentler sympathies of human nature. Cp. Thuc. II. 52.

5. *the house of mourning*] In the only other place in which the word rendered *mourning* occurs, Amos vi. 7, it is translated *banquet*, and so St Jerome here, *domus convivii*. It means, however, any *loud cry*, and the Syr. understands it of the piercing wail raised over the dead. With this most modern interpreters agree.

my peace..., even *lovingkindness and mercies*] The cause of Judah's utter ruin is the withdrawal of that peace which used to rest upon her as Jehovah's covenant-people, and which on His side used to shew itself in lovingkindness and mercies.

6. *nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them*] Both these practices were strictly forbidden in the law, Lev. xix. 28, xxi. 5; Deut. xiv. 1, probably as being heathen customs, 1 K. xviii. 28; Isai. xv. 2, but seem to have remained in common use, ch. vii. 29, xli. 5; Isai. xxii. 12; Ezek. vii. 18; Amos viii. 10; Micah i. 16. By *making bald* is meant shaving a bare patch on the front of the head.

7. *Neither shall* men *tear* themselves] The margin is undoubtedly right, *Neither shall men* **break bread** *for them;* and so LXX., Syr., Vulg., and Targ. It was customary upon the death of a relative to fast, and for the friends and neighbours after a decent delay to come and comfort the mourner, and urge food upon him, 2 S. i. 12, iii. 35, xii. 16, 17; food was also distributed at funerals to the mourners, Ezek. xxiv. 17; Hos. ix. 4, and to others, especially the poor, Tobit iv. 17.

the cup of consolation] See note on Prov. xxxi. 6.

8. *house of feasting*] Lit. *house of drinking.*

10. *they shall say...*] If the people are so hardened in their sins as to expostulate with the prophet, he is to shew them that the severe sentence passed upon them is the consequence of idolatry persisted in through many generations till it has finally deepened into national apostasy. See notes on ch. ii. 9, xi. 10, xiv. 20. For *imagination* in *v.* 12, read **stubbornness**, ch. iii. 17.

them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

[e] chap. 7. 26. 12 And ye have done [e] worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the [l] imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

[l] Or, *stubbornness.*

[k] Deut. 4. 27. & 28. 64, 65. 13 [k] Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

[i] chap. 23. 7, 8. 14 ¶ Therefore, behold, the [i] days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

15 But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

16 ¶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

17 For mine [k] eyes *are* upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

[k] Job 34. 21. Prov. 5. 21. chap. 32. 19.

18 And first I will recompense

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13. *and there shall ye...*] The words are ironical, *and there* **ye may serve** *other gods day and night*, **since I will shew you no** *favour*. The sense *where* given to אֲשֶׁר in the A.V. is incapable of proof, but it often means *because, inasmuch as, since*, see Gen. vi. 4; Deut. iii. 24, &c.

14, 15. *behold, the days come...*] These two verses, by promising a deliverance greater than that from Egypt, implied also a chastisement more terrible than the bondage in the iron furnace there. Instead of their being placed in one land, there was to be a scattering into the north and many other countries, followed finally by a restoration. While the armies of Nineveh and Babylon ground other nations into a confused mass, Judah was to come forth with its feelings of nationality and patriotism so deepened as almost to justify the reproach that the Jews were haters of the whole human race. But this prospect of future restoration was but a small comfort to Jeremiah's contemporaries. His words to them were a denunciation of exile, and the suspension of all their covenant-privileges. There is no reason, therefore, for regarding these two verses as an interpolation from ch. xxiii. 7, 8, though confessedly they do give a sudden turn to the prophet's discourse; but only to keep prominently in view the central truth declared in ch. iv. 27, "I will not make a full end."

16. *Behold, I will send for many fishers*] These verses follow out the idea which underlies *vv.* 14, 15. The scattering of the people is to be like that of hunted animals, of which but few escape, the ancient method of hunting being to enclose a large space with beaters and nets, and so drive everything within it to some place where it was destroyed. So the destruction of the whole male population was one of the horrible customs of ancient warfare, and the process is called in Herod. III. 149, "sweeping the country with a drag-net." The same authority, Book VI. 31, tells us that this method could only be effectually carried out on an island. Literally understood, the fishers are the main armies who, in the towns and fortresses, capture the people in crowds as in a net, while the hunters are the light-armed troops, who pursue the fugitives over the whole country, and drive them out of their hiding-places with as eager pleasure as hunters track out their game (cp. Amos iv. 2; Hab. i. 15). Spiritually the fathers expound it of the Apostles as "fishers of men." So Origen, "The Apostles are the Fishers, who from the divine Scriptures weave the nets whereby they draw men out of the briny sea of a worldly life, that God may give them a better life, even upon the mountains, with the prophets and their Lord, who was transfigured upon a mountain, and upon a mountain taught the people His beatitudes; and there the hunters are the angels, who come to receive their souls as they depart from their bodies" (Orig. in 'Catena Gr. Ghislerii,' II. 430).

17. *For mine eyes...*] This chastisement arises not from caprice, but is decreed upon full knowledge and examination of their doings.

18. *And first*] *i.e.* before the return from exile promised in *v.* 15. Rosenm. and others, following Rashi, translate, *I will recompense their former and their repeated iniquities and sins*, but the rendering of the A.V. is to be preferred.

their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcases of their detestable and abominable things.

19 O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* wherein *there is* no profit.

20 Shall a man make gods unto himself, and [l] they *are* no gods?

21 Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name *is* The LORD.

[l] chap. 2. 11.

I will recompense their iniquity...double] This was the ordinary rule of the law, see note on Isai. xl. 2. By taking these words literally, many, says St Chrysostom, have been troubled in mind, as though God did not punish men according to their desert, but more than their desert. But really every punishment is twofold: for first, there is the loss of the blessing which would have followed upon obedience, and secondly, the presence of actual misery. So, we may add, is sin twofold; there is the leaving of God's will undone, and the actual wrong-doing. Cp. ch. ii. 13.

because they have defiled...] Rather, *because they have profaned my land with the carcases of their detestable things, and have filled my inheritance with their abominations.* The division in the A. V. is in accordance with the accentuation, and is supported by Ewald; but the Masorites seem to have chiefly had in view the division of the verse into two equal portions, and have thus been led to neglect the more natural arrangement. *The carcases of their detestable things* means their lifeless and hateful idols, the very touch of which pollutes like that of a corpse, Num. xix. 11: but Rosenm. understands by the phrase *victims offered to idols*, especially *unclean animals*, cp. Lev. xxvi. 30.

19. *O LORD...*] In this and the two following verses, *vv.* 19—21, the prophet repeats his answer to the objection of the people made in *v.* 10, but urges it in a new form. So far from being innocent, they have desecrated Jehovah's land by their idolatry, and so far from idolatry being a light matter, it is a thing of which the very heathen will be ashamed, *v.* 19. For what folly is it for a man to suppose that a thing which he has made can be as good as himself, much less a god, *v.* 20. But as the Jews have chosen to put their trust in these senseless things, *Jehovah will teach them this once, i.e.* in a summary manner once for all, by a punishment which the nation shall never forget, that there is a difference between Him and idols.

my strength, and my fortress] Lit. *my strength and my place-of-strength*, the one for attack, and the other for defence.

21. *this once*] Whether we consider the greatness of the national disgrace and suffering caused by it, or its effect upon the mind of the Jews, the burning of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, followed by the captivity of the people at Babylon, stands out as the greatest manifestation of God's hand in all His dealings with them. Neither in the times of the judges, nor in the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, was there anything comparable to it. Only one other event in their history is of equal magnitude—the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, but that was the closing of their history as the preparatory Church, and comes therefore under a different category.

NOTE on CHAP. XVI. 7.

It is not necessary to change לָהֶם into לָהֶם, though this is the reading of the LXX. and Vulg., and is found in many MSS. The Syr. and Targ. support the ordinary reading. The argument that the sing. affix in לְנַחֲמוֹ, *to comfort him*, does not agree with לָהֶם, *to them*, is of little weight: for the Hebrew language is curiously indifferent to such things. Even in the second clause of the verse אוֹתָם, *them*, is followed by *his* father and *his* mother. Every Jew would understand what was meant by *neither shall they break for them in mourning*, and supply לָהֶם, though it is quite possible that from its similarity to לָהֶם it may have dropped out of the text.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 The captivity of Judah for her sin. 5 Trust in man is cursed, 7 in God is blessed. 9 The deceitful heart cannot deceive God. 12 The salvation of God. 15 The prophet complaineth of the mockers of his prophecy. 19 He is sent to renew the covenant in hallowing the sabbath.

THE sin of Judah *is* written with a [a] pen of iron, *and* with the [†] point of a diamond: *it is* graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars;

[a] Job 19. 24.
[†] Heb. *nail.*

2 Whilst their children remember their altars and their [b] groves by the green trees upon the high hills.

[b] Judg. 3. 7. Isai. 1. 29.

3 O my mountain in the field, [c] I will give thy substance *and* all thy treasures to the spoil, *and* thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders.

[c] chap. 15. 13.

4 And thou, even [†] thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which

[†] Heb. *in thyself.*

CHAP. XVII. 1. *The sin of Judah...*] This section, *vv.* 1—4, is inseparably connected with the preceding. Judah's sin had been there described as one of which the very Gentiles will become ashamed, and for which she will shortly be punished by an intervention of God's hand more marked than anything in her previous history. With increasing indignation Jeremiah now dwells upon the indelible nature of her sin, and repeats in *vv.* 3, 4 the prediction already made in ch. xv. 13, 14, as to the exact nature of her punishment.

a pen of iron] *i.e.* an iron chisel for cutting inscriptions upon tables of stone, Exod. xxxii. 16, or on rocks, Job xix. 24, or for engraving on plates of metal, 1 Macc. viii. 22.

the point of a diamond] Lit. *an iron nail* (finger-nail). *Shâmir*, which usually means a thorn, is put for the diamond also in Ezek. iii. 9; Zech. vii. 12. Pliny tells us ('Hist. Nat.' xxxvii. 15) that the ancients were well acquainted with its cutting powers, and used to set it in iron as is now done for the use of glaziers.

graven upon the table of their heart] *i.e.* upon their inner nature. Idolatry had impressed itself upon their whole moral being as deeply as God's law is to impress itself upon the hearts of the regenerate, ch. xxxi. 33.

upon the horns of your altars] Not Jehovah's one altar, but the many altars which the Jews had set up to Baalim, ch. xi. 13. Though Josiah had purged the land of these, yet doubtless in the eleven years of Jehoiakim's reign they had multiplied again, and were the external proofs of Judah's idolatry, as the table of her heart was the internal witness.

2. *Whilst their children remember their altars*] There seems to be in these words an allusion to their sacrifices of children to Molech. Present perhaps at some such blood-stained rite, its horrors would be engraven for ever upon the memory. As, however, the connection of this verse with the preceding is not very clear, many other translations have been suggested, which turn chiefly upon making *their children* the accusative after the verb *remember* instead of its subject. There is, however, no trace of such a rendering in any of the versions, but the contrary (for the LXX. see 'Origenis Hex.' ed. Field, II. 616, where the translation agrees with that of the A. V.), and the expositions of it are forced and unnatural.

groves] *Asherahs*, *i.e.* wooden images of Astarte, see Note on Exod. xxxiv. 13.

by the green trees upon the high hills] Lit. *upon* each *green tree upon the high hills*. The prep. *upon* before *tree* is very difficult. Keil and Nägelsb. connect it with *remember*, and give it a local sense, viz. that by every green tree and on the high hills they thought of the altars and Asherahs, and so Rashi. But this is very harsh. More probably the first *upon* is an error of some copyist, whose eye was misled by the same word repeated just afterwards, and with the Syr., Targ., and Arabic, we should read *under*. The LXX., however, have *ἐπί* in both places.

3. *O my mountain in the field*] *i.e.* Jerusalem or Zion, called the Rock of the Plain in ch. xxi. 13. As there are actually higher mountains round it, Jerusalem is here called *the mountain* not so much because of its commanding position (but see note on ch. xxi. 13) as because of its spiritual privileges. So elsewhere it is the "Mountain of Jehovah" (Micah iv. 2). *The field* is the open uninclosed country, here contrasted with the privileged height of Zion. Keil and Nägelsb. take *my mountain* as an accusative following *I will give*, but this makes the pronoun *thy* difficult of explanation. The argument of Keil that one would expect the pronoun in *thy substance* to be fem. if Jerusalem is meant, is without weight; for naturally it agrees with *mountain*, which in Hebr. is masc.

high places] See note on 1 S. ix. 12.

for sin] Not for a sin-offering, *i.e.* for utter destruction (Hitz.), but because of thy sin. Except this and the preceding word the rest of this clause has occurred before in ch. xv. 13.

4. *And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue...*] The verb rendered *discontinue* is that

thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, *which* shall burn for ever.

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited.

[d] Psal. 2. 12. & 34. 8. & 125. 1. Prov. 16. 20. Isai. 30. 18.

7 [d] Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

[e] Psal. 1, 3.

8 For he shall be [e] as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of [1] drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

[1] Or, *restraint.*

9 ¶ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

[f] 1 Sam. 16. 7. Psal. 7. 9. chap. 11. 20. & 20. 12.

10 I the LORD [f] search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

[1] Or, *gathereth young which she hath not brought forth.*

11 *As* the partridge [1] sitteth *on eggs*, and hatcheth *them* not; *so* he

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used of letting the land rest (Exod. xxiii. 11), and of releasing creditors (Deut. xv. 2) in the sabbatical year. As Judah had not kept these sabbatical years she must now discontinue the tillage of God's inheritance till the land had had its rest. The word rendered *even thyself* is difficult to understand. It may mean *and that through thyself*, through thy own fault, or as the Vulg. less probably translates, *alone*, lit. *and that with thyself*. For the rest of the verse see ch. xv. 14.

5. *Thus saith the* LORD] In the rest of the prophecy Jeremiah dwells upon the moral faults which had lead to Judah's ruin. These were chiefly proneness to trust in man, *vv.* 5—8, the deceitfulness of the heart, *vv.* 9, 10, and covetousness, *v.* 11. Upon this follows a solemn invocation of God as the Judge, who must for justice' sake punish everything that withdraws man from Jehovah, the sole fountain of living waters, *vv.* 12, 13. Finally, the prophet prays for himself, and claims deliverance on the ground that he had not sought his office, nor spoken words to please himself, *vv.* 14—18.

6. *like the heath*] Or, *like a destitute man*, as the word *'ar'ar* is translated in Ps. cii. 17, the only other place where it occurs. A similar word, *'aro'er*, is also translated *heath* in ch. xlviii. 6, where also the true rendering is *destitute*. The word comes from a root signifying *to be naked*, and probably it was the parallelism with *v.* 8 which suggested that it was a tree. The Arabic *'ar'ar* is the juniper, but the verbs *he shall see* (or **fear**) and *shall inhabit* plainly shew that a man is here meant and not a plant.

8. *the river*] Or, *water-course*, see Isai. xxx. 25, xliv. 4. Apparently it was an artificial streamlet made for purposes of irrigation. Cp. note on Ps. i. 3.

shall not see] *shall not* **fear.** So the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. The Masorites changed this into *shall not see* in order to make it correspond with *v.* 6. But the change is not merely unauthorized but meaningless. God's people see the heat when it comes: they feel trouble as much as other people, but they do not fear it because they know (1) that it is for their good, and (2) that God will give them strength to bear it.

Compare this verse with Ps. i. 3. The contrast with the wicked is here carried out more elaborately.

9. *The heart* is *deceitful above all*] The prophet's train of thought apparently is this: If thus the man is so blessed who trusts in Jehovah, what is the reason why men so generally "make flesh their arm"? It is because man's heart is incapable of seeing things in a direct and straightforward manner, but is knavish, full of that shrewd guile which sacrifices the whole to gain a part, hiding the true nature of things from itself, and ever seeking to overreach others.

desperately wicked] Rather, **mortally sick**, *incurable*, as in ch. xv. 18.

10. *I the* LORD *search the heart*] The answer to the question, *who can know it?* To himself a man's heart is an inscrutable mystery: God alone can fathom all its guile and depravity.

according to his ways, and...] Rather, *according to his* **way**, *according to the fruit of his doings*. *Way* is sing. and means his course of life; the *and* must be omitted, for the last clause explains what is meant by *man's way*, when he comes before God for judgment. It is *the fruit*, the final result *of his doings*, *i.e.* his real character as formed by the acts and habits of his life.

11. As *the partridge sitteth...*] Rather, *As the partridge hath gathered* eggs *which it laid not, so...* The verb *to gather* occurs in the Hebr. only in Isai. xxxiv. 15 of a snake (A.V.

that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

12 ¶ A glorious high throne from the beginning *is* the place of our sanctuary.

13 O LORD, the hope of Israel, [g] all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, *and* they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the [h] fountain of living waters.

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou *art* my praise.

15 ¶ Behold, they say unto me, [i] Where *is* the word of the LORD? let it come now.

16 As for me, [k] I have not hastened from *being* a pastor [†] to follow

[g] Psal. 73. 27. Isai. 1. 28.
[h] chap. 2. 13.
[i] Isai. 5. 19.
[k] chap. 1. 4, &c.
[†] Heb. *after thee.*

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great owl, but see note there) gathering her young to keep them warm; but the root is found frequently in the Chaldee in the sense of laying in a heap, with especial reference to birds. Thus in Job xxxix. 14 the ostrich is said to place its eggs in a heap on the ground. The sense therefore seems to be that attributed to the proverb by Epiphanius, who, with reference evidently to this passage, says, "The partridge is not satisfied with the fruit of her own womb, but steals the eggs of other birds, and carries them to her nest" ('Physiol.' 9). This notion might easily be taken from the great number of eggs which the partridge lays. Another interpretation is given by Hippolytus, who says that the partridge calls to it the young belonging to other broods, and gathers them under its wings, but that when they hear the cry of the true parent they leave the false one. Olympiodorus has much the same, and our translators have adopted this in the margin, but there is little to be said in its favour. The general sense is plain that the covetous man is as sure finally to reap only disappointment as the partridge which piles up eggs not of her own laying, and is unable to hatch them. See Note at end of Chapter.

shall leave them...] As Jehoiakim is described by Jeremiah as a covetous tyrant (ch. xxii. 17), and as he died at the age of thirty-six, he is supposed by some to be referred to in these words. But see *v.* 15.

shall be a fool] A Nabal, see note on ch. xiv. 21.

12. *A glorious...*] This verse is probably to be taken in connection with the next. *A throne of glory set on high from the beginning, the place of our sanctuary, the hope of Israel, Jehovah, all that forsake Thee*, &c. The prophet concludes his prediction with the expression of his own trust in Jehovah, and confidence that the divine justice will finally be vindicated by the punishment of the wicked. In so doing he first apostrophizes the temple as the seat of Jehovah's glory in Zion, and then rises to the thought of Him who sits enthroned there. Separated from Jehovah the temple is nothing (ch. vii. 4), but to the true worshipper the cloud of glory over the mercy-seat was the pledge of God's presence in the government of the world. The "throne of glory" is thus equivalent to Him who is enthroned in glory.

13. *they that depart from me*] Lit. (in the C'tib) *my deserters*, a rare but not unexampled form of substantive. The corrections of the Kri, Ewald, and others are to be rejected, though the change of person from *thee* to *me* would be strange in any language except Hebrew.

shall be written in the earth] *i.e.* their names shall quickly disappear, unlike those graven in the rock for ever, Job xix. 24. From the scarcity of writing materials a board covered with sand is used in the East to this day in schools for giving lessons in writing: and the Arabs have a method of fortune-telling, the invention of which is ascribed by them to the patriarch Enoch, which they call Raml, because it is effected by certain signs drawn upon sand. But writing inscribed on such materials was intended to be immediately obliterated, and equally fleeting is the existence of those who forsake God. Origen gives the words a good though secondary meaning: "All men are written somewhere, the saints in heaven, but sinners upon earth."

the fountain] See notes on ch. ii. 13, ix. 1.

14. *Heal me*] Having in the preceding two verses expressed his general confidence in the justice of God's dealing, Jeremiah concludes with the prayer that he may himself experience that justice, *v.* 14. His enemies reproach him with the failure of his predictions, *v.* 15, but he appeals to God as witness that he has not acted of his own will, *v.* 16, and may therefore claim deliverance for himself as his due and chastisement for his enemies.

15. *Where* is *the word of the* LORD *?*] This taunt shews that this prophecy was written before any very signal fulfilment of Jeremiah's words had taken place, and prior therefore to the capture of Jerusalem at the close of Jehoiakim's life. *Now* at the end of the clause is not an adverb of time, but means *I pray, if you please*, and is ironical.

16. *from* being *a pastor to follow thee*] Rather, *from being a shepherd* **after Thee.** "Shep-

thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was *right* before thee.

17 Be not a terror unto me: thou *art* my hope in the day of evil.

18 [l]Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and [m]destroy them with double destruction.

19 ¶ Thus said the LORD unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem;

20 And say unto them, Hear ye the word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates:

21 Thus saith the LORD; [n]Take

[l] Psal. 35. 4. & 40. 14.
† Heb. *break them with a double breach.*
[m] chap. 11. 20.
[n] Neh. 13. 19.

herd" means *ruler, magistrate*, see ch. ii. 8, and belongs to the prophet not as a teacher, but as one invested with authority by God to guide and direct the political course of the nation. So Jehovah guides His people, Ps. xxiii. 1, 2, and the prophet does so *after Him*, following obediently His instructions. Umbreit's rendering, *I have not forced myself forward to follow Thee as a shepherd*, gives a good sense, *i.e.* "I have not forced myself into the office of prophet," but the preposition *from* before *being a shepherd* renders it impossible.

the woeful day] Lit. *the day of mortal sickness*, see on *v.* 9. The day is of course that on which Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and the temple burnt.

that which came out of my lips was right *before thee*] The A.V. inserts the word *right* to the spoiling of the sense. What Jeremiah asserts is that he spake as in God's presence. They were no words of his own, but had the authority of Him before whom he stood, see ch. xv. 19. It is a claim on his part not merely that God knew all that he said, Prov. v. 21, but that it had His approval and concurrence.

17. *Be not a terror unto me*] Rather, *a cause of dismay*, or consternation, see on ch. i. 17. By not fulfilling Jeremiah's prediction God Himself seemed to put him to shame. The verb occurs again twice in the second clause of *v.* 18, and is there rendered *dismayed*.

18. *Let them be confounded*] **Be put to shame.**

destroy them...] Rather, **break them with a double breaking.** The double breaking may either mean a complete and utter ruin; or more exactly a twofold punishment, the first their general share in the miseries attendant upon their country's fall; the second, a special punishment for their sin in persecuting and mocking God's prophet.

JEREMIAH'S TENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xvii. 19—27.

The Sabbath.

This prophecy has no connection with what precedes, but is the first of a series of short predictions, arranged probably in chronological order among themselves, but in other respects independent of one another (Introd. p. 321). Its tone is mild, and dissuasive rather of future neglect than condemnatory of past misconduct. In *v.* 25 it speaks of the possibility of the continuance of David's throne, and of an era of earthly prosperity. As Hitzig remarks, the balance is still even; neither side yet inclines; and we can have little doubt therefore in assigning its date to the commencement of Jehoiakim's reign before he had thrown the fatal die. It may however have been earlier, though its similarity to the prophecy contained in ch. xxii. 1—5 makes it probable that they were contemporaneous.

19. *the gate of the children of the people*] As this gate is not mentioned in the enumeration in Neh. iii. conjecture has been busy in guessing which it might be. As "the sons of the people" may mean the common people, as it is translated in ch. xxvi. 23; or the laity in opposition to the priests (see 2 Chro. xxxv. 5); it was probably a gate of the temple, for it is scarcely credible that any city gate by which the kings went in and out would take its name from the common people: but if "the laymen's gate" was, as Keil supposes, the principal entrance of the outer court of the temple, the kings would naturally make use of it; while the priests entered at the side. Very probably there was traffic there, as in our Lord's time, in doves and other requisites for sacrifice, and so the warning to keep the sabbath was as necessary there as at the city gates. We can imagine no reason why one particular city gate should be selected for especial mention.

21. *Take heed to yourselves*] Lit. *Take heed in your souls, i.e.* **in** *yourselves*, see ch. ii. 34. The A.V. loses much emphasis by substituting the ordinary phrase *to yourselves*. They were to be on their guard from the depths of their own conscience, thoroughly and on conviction.

heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I [o] commanded your fathers.

[o] Exod. 20. 8. & 23. 12. & 31. 13. Ezek. 20. 12.

23 But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

24 And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;

25 [p] Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever.

[p] chap. 22. 4.

26 And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD.

27 But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the

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bear no burden on the sabbath day] Apparently the sabbath day was not left unobserved by the people, but was kept only negligently. The incidental mention of it in passages such as 2 K. iv. 23, xi. 5; Isai. i. 13; Hosea ii. 11; Amos viii. 5, testifies to its constant maintenance; while expostulations such as Isai. lvi. 2, 6, lviii. 13; Ezek. xx. 16 prove the importance attached to it by the prophets. To judge by what is said here, the country people were in the habit of coming to Jerusalem on the sabbath to attend the temple service, but mingled traffic with their devotions, bringing the produce of their fields and gardens with them for disposal. And as the people of Jerusalem are described in *v.* 22 as *carrying forth burdens out of their houses*, they seem to have taken their wares to the gates, and carried on a brisk traffic there with the villagers. Both parties seem to have abstained from manual labour, but did not consider that buying and selling were prohibited by the fourth commandment. Cp. Neh. xiii. 15—22.

25. *princes sitting upon the throne of David*] Objection has been taken to this, because only the kings sat on David's throne, and it has been further pointed out that the princes are not mentioned in ch. xxii. 4. But the object of the prophet in this place is to give a noble picture of national grandeur, and therefore he associates with the king the princes of the Davidic lineage, who in magnificent procession in chariots and on horses, attended by other princes of inferior rank and multitudes of people, accompany the king as he goes in and out of Jerusalem.

this city shall remain for ever] Or, *shall be inhabited for ever*. It is not mere existence which is promised, but populousness.

26. *they shall come*] The reward for keeping the sabbath day holy consists in three things; (1) in great national prosperity, indicated by the continuance of the lineage of David and its magnificence, (2) in the lasting welfare of Jerusalem, and (3) in the wealth and piety of the people generally, indicated by their numerous sacrifices. The sacrifices mentioned here are the 'Olah, or burnt-offering entirely consumed upon the altar; the Zebach, which was a feast also for the offerer, the flesh excepting the priest's portion being consumed by him and his friends; the Minchah, or unbloody offering, being an eucharist of gratitude to God for His bounteous gifts in nature; and lastly frankincense, which always accompanied the Minchah. See Introduction to Leviticus.

bringing sacrifices of praise] Rather, *bringing* **praise**. The unauthorized introduction of the word *sacrifices* limits the sense. Really this clause covers all that precedes. Whether the people brought 'olahs, or minchahs, whatever it might be, they came to bring praise to Jehovah. See note on "sacrifice praise" in Ps. l. 14.

The verse is further interesting as specifying the exact limits of the dominions of the Davidic kings, now confined to Judah and Benjamin. These two tribes are divided according to their physical conformation into the Shefêlah, or low country, lying between the mountains and the Mediterranean; the mountain, which formed the central region, extending to the wilderness of Judah, on the Dead Sea; and the Negeb, or arid region, which lay to the south of Judah.

sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

27. *then will I kindle a fire...*] Upon disobedience follows the anger of God, which will consume like a fire all the splendour of the offending city. Cp. vii. 20, xxi. 14; Hosea viii. 14; Amos i. 14.

NOTE on CHAP. XVII. 11.

In the Targum Job xxxix. 14 the Latin version of תרגר is *fovet*, and Keil is misled by this rendering. For the noun דגורא occurs there so constantly in the one meaning of a *heap* of stones, &c., that there can be no doubt as to its true signification. Cp. Gen. xxxi. 46; Exod. viii. 14; Josh. vii. 26; 2 S. xviii. 17; 2 K. x. 8, &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Under the type of a potter is shewed God's absolute power in disposing of nations.* 11 *Judgments threatened to Judah for her strange revolt.* 18 *Jeremiah prayeth against his conspirators.*

THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the ‖ wheels.

4 And the vessel † that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he † made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

‖ Or, *frames, or, seats.*

† Or, *that he made was marred, as clay in the hand of the potter.*

† Heb. *returned and made.*

JEREMIAH'S ELEVENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xviii.

The Potter.

In this, the second prophecy of the series, there is a marked advance upon the first. In it the fate of Jerusalem was still undetermined; a long line of kings might yet reign there in splendour, and the city be inhabited for ever. Plainly this was possible only so long as it was still undecided whether Josiah's efforts would end in a national reformation or not; and so before Jehoiakim threw the weight of the kingly office into the opposite balance. In the present prophecy mercy is still offered to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but they reject it. "There is no hope," they say; "but we will walk after our own devices," *vv.* 11, 12. They have made their final choice: and thereupon follows the third prophecy of "The Broken Vessel" ch. xix., in which the utter overthrow of city and kingdom is foretold. We should thus place the prophecy of the Potter very early in the reign of Jehoiakim; and that of the Broken Vessel at the commencement of his fourth year. But besides this internal evidence there is external proof. In anger at the last prophecy Pashur puts Jeremiah in the stocks, ch. xx. 2, who thereupon prophecies that he shall be carried captive to Babylon, *v.* 6. Now in Zedekiah's reign Pashur's office was held by Zephaniah, ch. xxix. 26, so that Pashur must have been carried into captivity after Jehoiakim's death with Jeconiah. But as such an outrage upon a prophet as that committed by Pashur upon Jeremiah, would certainly not have been permitted in Josiah's time: and as after the first four years of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah was in hiding, and dared not shew himself till just at last when the Chaldæans were marching upon Jerusalem, no other date for the prophecy is probable except that given above.

2. *go down to the potter's house*] *i.e.* workshop. The clay-field where the potters exercised their craft lay to the south of Jerusalem just beyond the valley of Hinnom. It was afterwards made famous for ever by the prophecy of Zech. xi. 13, fulfilled Matt. xxvii. 10.

3. *the wheels*] Lit. *the two wheels*. The Syr., Targ., and Vulg. agree with the A.V. in taking the word as the dual of *oben*=*ofen* a wheel, but the LXX. render it *stones*, from *eben* a stone. Of these two wheels the lower one was worked by the feet (Ecclus. xxxviii. 29) to give motion to the upper one, which was a flat disc or plate of wood, on which the potter laid the clay, and moulded it as it rapidly revolved with his fingers. In Wilkinson's 'Manners of the Ancient Egyptians' III. 164, there is a plate representing the whole art of pottery as shewn in the paintings on the walls of the temples. There is, however, but one wheel worked by one hand, while the potter shapes the clay with the other.

4. *And the vessel that he made of clay*] See Note at end of Chapter.

[a] Isa. 45. 9. Wisd. 15. 7. Rom. 9. 20.

6 O house of Israel, [a] cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

7 *At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to [b] pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it;*

[b] chap. 1. 10.

8 If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, [c] I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

[c] Jonah 3. 10.

9 And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it;*

10 If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

11 ¶ Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: [d] return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

[d] 2 Kin. 17. 13. chap. 7. 3. & 25. 5. & 35. 15.

12 And they said, [e] There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

[e] chap. 2. 25.

[f] chap. 2. 10.

13 Therefore thus saith the LORD; [f] Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.

‖ Or, *my fields for a rock,* or for *the snow of Lebanon? shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters?*

14 Will *a man* leave ‖ the snow of Lebanon *which cometh* from the

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6. *so* are *ye in mine hand*] When through the clay not being of a proper consistency, or otherwise not answering to the potter's will, the vessel is spoilt, he does not throw it away, but crushes it together, dashes it back upon the wheel, and begins his work afresh, till the clay has taken the predetermined shape. So then it was God's purpose that Judæa should become the proper scene for the manifestation of the Messiah, and its sons be fit to receive the Saviour's teaching and carry the good tidings to all lands. If therefore at any stage of the preparation the Jewish nation took in its free will such a course as would have frustrated this purpose of Providence, it was crushed by affliction into an unresisting mass, in which the formative process forthwith began again.

7. At what *instant*] This must be taken in connection with *v.* 9. The usual meaning is *suddenly*, lit. "in a moment." Here it more probably signifies *at one time—at another time.* The verbs employed in this and the 9th verse are the same as those used in ch. i. 10.

8, 10. *I will repent of the evil...I will repent of the good*] All God's dealings with mankind are here declared to be conditional. For this reason the Scriptures are called the Old and New Covenants, because there is nothing in them absolute and finally fixed, but they set forth a relationship between God and man, in which, as God changeth not, all depends upon man's conduct. St Hilary (on Ps. ii. 9) says, that just as the potter, when a vessel is marred in the making, can restore it to its original shape, or even change it to a better, so God upon men's repentance can change even the impious unto piety (ed. Par. 1652, p. 674 B).

11. *Behold, I frame*] The word rendered *frame* is a present participle, and is the same which as a noun means a potter, lit. a *shaper*, one who shapes vessels. By the use then of this term God declares that the fact of His promises being conditional does not limit His power, but that He is as free to do what He will with the Jews as the potter is free to shape as he will the clay.

and devise a device] Rather, *I am purposing a purpose.* The verb implies deliberation.

make your ways...good] See on ch. vii. 3.

12. *And they said*] Better, **But they say.** The verb in Hebr. is in the consecutive perfect, expressive of repeated action, and therefore in English must be put in the present, as in Ezek. xxxiii. 17, 20. Cp. Isai. xxx. 10.

There is no hope] See ch. ii. 25.

imagination] **Stubbornness**, see ch. iii. 17.

13. *Ask ye now among the heathen*] *i.e.* the nations. The unnatural conduct of Judah is demonstrated in the same way as in ch. ii. 10, 11.

the virgin of Israel] See on ch. xiv. 17 and cp. Isai. i. 8. The contrast between the chaste retirement of a virgin, and Judah's eagerness after idolatry, serves to heighten the horror at her conduct.

14. *Will* a man *leave the snow of Lebanon* which cometh *from the rock of the field?*] Rather, *Will the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of the field?* The meaning probably is, "Will the snow of Lebanon fail from its rocks which tower above the land of Israel?" Lebanon, *i.e.* the *white* mountain, is so called

rock of the field? *or* shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

15 Because my people hath forgotten [f] me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways *from* the [h] ancient paths, to walk in paths, *in* a way not cast up;

16 To make their land [i] desolate, *and* a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

17 I will scatter them as with an

[f] chap. 2. 13. & 17. 13.

[h] chap. 6. 16.

[i] chap. 19. 8. & 49. 13. & 50. 13.

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because the snow never disappears from its heights. The field is the open country (see ch. iv. 17), but here means the whole land. Hitzig, however, argues that *the rock of the field* is not Lebanon itself, but Jerusalem, called in ch. xvii. 3 *my mountain in the field*, and in ch. xxi. 13 *the rock of the plain*. He also shews that the dew of Hermon, one of the grandest mountain-masses of Lebanon, crowned with a whole crest of summits, is said in Ps. cxxxiii. 3 (where see note) to descend upon the hill of Zion. He suggests therefore that the waters of Gihon in Jerusalem, which were never known to fail, might be supposed to be fed by the melting snow of Lebanon. But a cool wind might easily be supposed to bring the dew-cloud from Lebanon, while the notion that the springs of Jerusalem are fed from so very distant a source is improbable. Add too that it is as natural to call Lebanon "the rock of the field" as it is to give that name to Zion, and in Ps. cxxxii. 6 its lower slopes are called "the fields of the wood." The appeal then of the prophet is to the unchangeableness of one of nature's most beautiful phenomena, the perpetual snow upon the upper summits of Lebanon.

shall the cold...be forsaken?] Lit. *shall the strange, i.e.* foreign, *cool downflowing waters be plucked up?* On *plucked up*, see Note at end of Chapter. *Strange*, which is very well paraphrased in the A. V. *that come from another place, i.e.* from afar, is an epithet which as applied to the streams that descend from the melting snows of Lebanon is difficult to understand. Possibly, however, it may have been in common use of the water-supply of Jerusalem, and especially of the fountain of Siloam, of which Jerome on Isai. viii. 6 says that its waters were intermittent, as is still the case, bursting forth at intervals from subterranean passages and caverns in the hard rock. The Jews may have accounted for this phenomenon by supposing that they came from a distant source. Ewald and Graf however understand *pressed together, i.e.* flowing through narrow gorges and between rocks. This gives a good sense, but there is no sufficient proof that the word can have this meaning. On the streams of Lebanon see Song of Sol. iv. 15. The general sense is plain. God is Israel's rock, the Rock of ages (Isai. xxvi. 4 marg.), from whom the never-failing waters flow (ch. ii. 13): but men may and do abandon the cool waters which descend from above to seek their happiness in channels of their own digging.

15. *Because*] Rather, **For**. Jeremiah now returns to, and continues the words of, *v.* 13, the intermediate questions being parenthetical.

to vanity] Not the ordinary word for *vanity, i.e.* worthlessness, but one meaning *falsehood*, used also in ch. ii. 30, iv. 30, vi. 29. It signifies, therefore, that the worship of idols is not merely useless but injurious.

they have caused them to stumble] This is either put impersonally, *and men make them stumble*, or the *false gods* may be supplied from the idea in the preceding clause. The former is best: for it was Judah's prophets and priests that made her to err (ch. v. 31): the idols were powerless for good and for evil.

in their ways from *the ancient paths...*] Or, *in their ways*, **the everlasting** *paths, to walk in* **byways**, *in a road not cast up.* Hitzig argues that the ancient ways must be the bad example of their forefathers, and therefore makes it the subject of the clause, and translates, *the ancient paths have caused them to err.* But *the paths of eternity* carry back the mind not to the immediate but to the distant past, and suggest the good old ways in which the patriarchs used to walk. The old always seems to us the good, because "the memory of the just is blessed, while that of the wicked doth rot" (Prov. x. 7). The *road cast up* means one raised sufficiently to keep it out of the reach of floods, &c. We still call our chief roads *highways*, because when the country was undrained it was necessary to raise them above the level of the adjoining fields. Cp. Isai. lvii. 14, lxii. 10. Our highway is Christ, John xiv. 6.

16. *their land desolate...shall be astonished*] In the Hebr. the words rendered *astonished* and *desolate* are the same. For the meaning see note on ch. v. 30. With the idea of *terror* contained in it the word *hissing* agrees, which means, not derision, but the drawing in of the breath quickly as men do when they shudder.

wag his head] Or, **shake** *his head*, a sign among the Jews not of scorn but of pity (ch. xvi. 5, where *to bemoan them* is lit. *to shake for them*). To wag the head implies ridicule: the desolation of the land of Israel is to fill men with dismay.

17. *as with an east wind*] Rather, *like the east wind I will scatter them before the*

east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

18 ¶ Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; [k] for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him [l] with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

20 Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, *and* to turn away thy wrath from them.

21 Therefore [l] deliver up their children to the famine, and [†] pour out their *blood* by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and *be* widows; and let their men be put to death; *let* their young men *be* slain by the sword in battle.

22 Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

23 Yet, LORD, thou knowest all

[k] Mal. 2. 7.

[l] Or, *for the tongue.*

[l] Psal. 109. 10.

[†] Heb. *pour them out.*

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enemy. Many MSS. however read *with an east wind* (ברוח for ברוח). For the effects of the east wind see Job xxvii. 21, xxxviii. 24; Ps. xlviii. 7; Isai. xxvii. 8.

I will shew them the back] As God's making His face to shine upon His people is the greatest of blessings (Num. vi. 25), so the hiding of His face implied in turning His back upon them, is the sure sign of His displeasure (Isai. i. 15, lix. 2). Cp. also the conduct of the people in ch. ii. 27.

18. We have in this verse an account of the effect which the foregoing prophecy had upon the Jews, who were only hardened by it, and determined to compass Jeremiah's death. This is followed in the rest of the chapter by his vehement prayer to God for deliverance from their plots. It is plain that the foregoing prophecy was spoken in public, and that when Jeremiah affirmed that the nation would be scattered before their enemies, the rage of the people broke out into open threats.

let us devise devices] *i.e. deliberately frame a plot* for his ruin, see on *v.* 11.

the law shall not perish, &c.] As much as to say, What need have we of this Jeremiah? Have we not priests with the Torah, the Law of Moses, wise statesmen to give us counsel, and prophets to declare to us "the word"? Not indeed the word of Jehovah, which was too disagreeable for them to wish to have more of it, but that pleasant word—the smooth things of Isai. xxx. 10,—which false prophets know so well how to flavour to suit human appetites. As the Torah was imperishable, the people probably drew the conclusion that the Levitical priesthood must also endure for ever, and therefore that Jeremiah's predictions of national ruin were blasphemous (cp. Acts vi. 13, 14).

let us smite him with the tongue] Right: there is nothing in the Hebr. to justify the alternative given in the margin. Their purpose was to carry a malicious report of what he had said to king Jehoiakim, and so stir up his anger against him. Cp. the behaviour of Amaziah, high-priest of Bethel, towards Amos (Amos vii. 10, 11).

19. *Give heed*] As the Jews will give no heed, Jeremiah appeals to God, and prays Him to listen to and notice *the voice*, *i.e.* the loud outcry and threats of those who were contending with him.

20. *Shall evil be recompensed for good?*] Jeremiah had been labouring earnestly to avert the ruin of his country, but instead of hearing him the Jews treated him as the husbandmen do some noxious animal which wastes their fields, and for which they dig pit-falls. See Ps. lvii. 6.

Remember] An allusion to the repeated intercession in the dialogue in chs. xiv. xv.

21. *pour out their* blood *by the force of the sword*] Lit. *pour them out upon the hands of the sword*, *i.e.* **give them up to the sword.** The metaphor is a very strong one, and means "toss them out like dregs from a vessel to the sword." For *the hands of the sword* see Ps. lxiii. 10 marg.

let their men be put to death] Rather, let their men be **slain of death.** The prophet's phrase leaves it entirely indefinite in what way the men are to die.

22. *Let a cry*] Upon defeat in battle and the ravage of famine follows at length the sack of the city with all the horrible cruelties practised at such a time.

23. *Yet, LORD*] Better, **But,** *LORD.* The antithesis is to the *hiding* of snares in the preceding verse. They conceal their plots, but God knows, and therefore must punish. Cp. ch. xvii. 10.

† Heb. *for death.*

their counsel against me † to slay *me:* forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; deal *thus* with them in the time of thine anger.

but let them be overthrown] This is the translation of the Kri, which makes this a separate imprecation. The C'tib, however, rightly connects it with the preceding clause, *blot not out their sin from before Thy face* **that they may be made to stumble** *before Thee.*

deal thus *with them*] The inserted *thus* spoils the sense, of which the force lies in the last words. As there is an acceptable time and a day of salvation, so there is a time of anger, and Jeremiah's prayer is that God would deal with his enemies at such a time, and when therefore no mercy would be shewn.

On imprecations such as these, see the note on Ps. cix. Though they did not flow from personal vengeance, but from a pure zeal for God's honour, yet they belong to the legal spirit of the Jewish covenant. We must not, however, because we have been shewn a "more excellent way," condemn too harshly that sterner spirit of justice, which animated so many of the saints of the earlier dispensation.

NOTES on CHAP. XVIII. 4, 14.

4. The reading בחמר *in* or *of clay* is found in fifty-eight MSS., and in Aq., Theod., the Targ., and Syr., and is confirmed by the Masora on *v.* 6, and on Job x. 9. The other reading בחמר *as clay* is an error caused by the copyist having been misled by *v.* 6.

14. Most certainly Jerome had the reading ינתשו, for he renders it *evelli possunt;* and so Aquila *εἰ ἐκκοπήσονται ὕδατα ἀλλότρια ψυχρὰ καταρρέοντα*; If this reading be retained the explanation of the Syriac is the right one, *Can the strange cool waters be stayed which flow down* (from Lebanon)? But most probably the letters ש and ת have changed places, and the right reading is ינשתו *shall they be dried up?* see Isai. xix. 5. So Gesenius.

CHAPTER XIX.

Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel is foreshewed the desolation of the Jews for their sins.

THUS saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;

JEREMIAH'S TWELFTH PROPHECY.
Chaps. xix., xx.
The Broken Vessel, with the events which followed thereon.

The present prophecy is to be taken in close connection with the preceding, one portion of the teaching of which it brings out into clearer view. When the potter is forming a vessel, if the clay does not answer to his plan, he crushes it together and forms it anew. Now the clay is the Jewish nation as a whole, which finally must perform its appointed office in the world. But what is meant by the crushing of the ill-formed vessel? In this prophecy we are taught that it means the destruction of that generation, or that state of things, which opposed itself to the will of God. Jeremiah, in order to bring this aspect of things clearly to the view, now chooses a vessel baked in the fire, and therefore incapable of being reshaped. It is the symbol of the obdurate, of those who have taken their final form, and "being unjust are to be unjust still" (Rev. xxii. 11). In solemn procession accompanied by the ancients of the people and of the priests he must bear the vessel out to the place of doom, the valley of ben-Hinnom or Gehenna, where the altars of Molech had been impurpled with the blood of innocents, and where their own guilty carcases were soon to lie so thick upon the ground that it would be called "The Valley of Slaughter." There he was to break the vessel, and just as all the art of the potter would be of no avail to restore the broken fragments, so did God proclaim the final destruction of Jerusalem such as it then was, and of that generation which inhabited it.

CHAP. XIX. 1. *Go and get* (*i.e.* purchase) *a potter's earthen bottle*] The potter is here called *a shaper of earthenware* (see on ch. xviii. 11) to shew of what material the bottle was to be. The A.V. does this by inserting *earthen* afterwards. The *bottle*, Hebr. *bakbuk*, was a flask with a long neck, and took its name from the noise made by liquids in running out.

and take *of the ancients*] The LXX. and Syr. both supply the lacuna in the same way, and the sense requires it, though it is a very bold construction. These *elders* were the regularly constituted representatives of the people (see ch. xxix. 1; Num. xi. 16; Josh. vii. 6; 1 K. viii. 1, &c.), and the organization lasted

2 And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by †Heb. *the sun gate.* the entry of † the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

3 And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever hear- [a] 1 Sam. 3. 11. [2] 2 Kin. 21. 12. eth, his ears shall [a] tingle.

4 Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;

5 They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, [b] which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind: [b] chap. 7. 31, 32.

6 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.

7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their [c] carcases will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. [c] chap. 7. 33. & 16. 4.

8 And I will make this city [d] desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. [d] chap. 18. 16. & 49. 13. & 50. 13.

9 And I will cause them to eat the

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down to our Saviour's time (Matt. xxvi. 47). Similarly the priests had also their representatives (2 K. xix. 2). Accompanied thus by the representatives of Church and State, the prophet was to carry the earthen bottle, the humiliating symbol of their mean origin and frail existence (Gen. iii. 19; Deut. xxvi. 5; Isai. li. 1), outside the walls of Jerusalem.

2. *the valley of the son of Hinnom*] Or, *of ben-Hinnom*. See note on ch. vii. 31.

the east gate, marg. *the sun gate*] The gate is called in the Hebr. *harsuth*, a word which neither the LXX. nor the Syr. attempt to translate, but Jerome renders it the pottery gate, and the Targ. the dung gate. The A. V. derives it from *heres* (חרס), an archaic word for the sun (see on Job ix. 7), but Jerome from *heres* (חרשׂ), earthenware. This is probably right, as *harsith*, the form adopted in the Kri, occurs in the Talmud for potter's clay. Two gates led into the valley of Hinnom, the Fountain-gate at the south-east corner, and the Dung-gate on the south-west side of Zion. Which of these is meant cannot be decided (Keil). Kimchi thinks it was neither, but a small or postern gate, used for throwing out rubbish, the valley having been put to this degrading use from the time that Josiah defiled it (2 K. xxiii. 10). And thus the mean symbol of a proud nation was carried out through a back door to be broken upon the heaps of refuse already cast there.

3. *O kings of Judah*] Spoken in the plural because the message, *vv.* 3—9, related not specially to the reigning king, but to the whole royal house. No king of David's line was henceforth to sit upon the throne till He came whose is the true kingdom (John xviii. 37).

his ears shall tingle] The reference to 1 S. iii. 11 shews that the thought of Shiloh was in Jeremiah's mind. See on ch. vii. 14.

4. *and have estranged this place*] In Job xxi. 29 this verb translated *ye do not know* is used in the sense of not recognizing. So here they have not recognized the sanctity of this place, but have treated it as a strange place, doubtless by worshipping in it strange gods.

the blood of innocents] *i.e.* of guiltless persons, see ch. ii. 34, vii. 6, xxii. 3, 17, and 2 K. xxi. 16. The sacrifice of children to Molech forms a new count in the indictment, and does not come till the next verse.

5, 6. These two verses are almost identical with ch. vii. 31, 32. Baal is Molech, see note on ch. ii. 23.

7. *I will make void*] The verb used here is that from which *bakbuk*, *bottle* (*v.* 1) is derived, and as it represents the sound made by the water running out, it would be better translated, *I will pour out*. Neumann supposes that Jeremiah carried the bottle to Tophet full of water, the symbol in the East of life (Isai. xxxv. 6, xli. 18), and at these words emptied it before the assembled elders.

8. *I will make desolate*] See on ch. xviii. 16.

because of all the plagues thereof] Lit. *because of all her blows*. Plague is a Greek word signifying a blow or smiting, but is

e Lev. 26. 29. Deut. 28. 53. Lam. 4. 10. e flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.

10 Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,

11 And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that † Heb. *be healed.* cannot †be made whole again: and f chap. 7. 32. they shall f bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.

12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet:

13 And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose g roofs they have burned g chap. 32. 29. incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD's house; and said to all the people,

15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

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generally confined by us to pestilences, as blows that come directly from God.

9. This verse is quoted almost literally from Deut. xxviii. 53, where it is followed by a vivid description of the terrible effects of hunger during a siege. For the fulfilment see Lam. ii. 20, iv. 10.

11. *that cannot be made whole again*] Lit. *that cannot be healed.* In this lies the distinction between this symbol and that of ch. xviii. 4. The plastic clay can be shaped and reshaped till the potter forms with it the vessel he had predetermined: the broken bottle is of no further use, but its fragments are cast away for ever upon the heaps of rubbish deposited in Tophet.

The act of *breaking* the bottle would be more suggestive of a national calamity to the Jews than it is to us because it was the word they used for it. In the A.V. the following phrases, "a great destruction," "hurt," "wound," "breach," "affliction," and "destruction," are all in the Hebrew simply "breaking."

12. *and* even *make this city as Tophet*] *i.e.* as a place to be spat upon, see ch. vii. 31.

13. *And the houses...shall be defiled as the place of Tophet*] Or, *shall be as the place, Tophet the defiled.* See Note at end of Chapter.

because of all] Rather, **even** *all*, literally *with reference to all*, limiting the denunciation to those houses whose roofs had been defiled with altars.

upon whose roofs they have burned incense] See note on 2 K. xxiii. 12. The flat roofs of oriental buildings were used for gatherings at festivals (Judg. xvi. 27), for exercise (2 S. xi. 2), for the erection of booths at the feast of tabernacles (Neh. viii. 16), and for public meetings (Matt. x. 27). They seem also to have been the favourite place for star-worship (Zeph. i. 5).

14. *he stood in the court of the LORD's house*] As it was this repetition of the prophecy in the temple which so greatly irritated Pashur, these two verses ought to be joined to the next chapter.

15. *Behold, I will bring*, &c.] We probably have in this only a summary of Jeremiah's words. Doubtless the symbolical act in Tophet would form as it were the text, and the prophet would now fully declare its meaning in a speech addressed to the assembled multitudes.

NOTE on CHAP. XIX. 13.

The grammar of the word *defiled* is very difficult: the article forbids its being the predicate construed with *houses*, while being plural it is harsh to join it to the sing. word *place*. The Hebrew language is however so lax in its concords that this is the most probable, and we may suppose that it was put into the plural by attraction to the subject of the proposition, *houses*. Ewald's suggestion that the article should be got rid of by attaching it to the

preceding word, and so reading Tophteh as the Hebr. in Isai. xxx. 33, is untenable. As Keil observes, Tophteh means a Tophet-like place, and, besides, the meaning is not that the houses shall be defiled, but, as the Targum rightly gives it, that they shall become like the unclean Tophet, heaps of rubbish. They had been defiled already by being used for idolatrous purposes.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Pashur, smiting Jeremiah, receiveth a new name, and a fearful doom.* 7 *Jeremiah complaineth of contempt,* 10 *of treachery,* 14 *and of his birth.*

[a] 1 Chron. 24. 14.

NOW Pashur the son of [a] Immer the priest, who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.

2 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD.

3 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but [‖] Magor-missabib.

[‖] That is, *Fear round about.*

CHAP. XX. The breaking of the bottle had been done so solemnly before witnesses of such high position, and its meaning had been so unmistakeably proclaimed in the temple, that those in authority could endure such proceedings no longer. Roused therefore to anger by the sight of the listening crowds, Pashur, the deputy high-priest, caused Jeremiah to be arrested, inflicted upon him the legal forty stripes save one, and made him pass a night in the stocks, exposed to the jeers of the scoffers, at the most public gate of the temple. Apparently it was Jeremiah's last public prophecy in Jehoiakim's reign, and was the cause why in the fourth year of that king it was no longer safe for him to go to the house of Jehovah (ch. xxxvi. 5). It is probable also that Jehoiakim's roll ended with the prophecy of the potter's vessel, and the account of the contumelies to which the prophet had in consequence been exposed. One prophecy, however, at least in our present book, is of a later date, that of the linen girdle, ch. xiii.

1. *Pashur the son of Immer*] Pashur, the father probably of the Gedaliah mentioned in ch. xxxviii. 1 (Hitz.), was the head of the sixteenth course of priests (1 Chro. xxiv. 14) called the sons of Immer, their ancestor in David's time, while the other Pashur mentioned in ch. xxi. 1 belonged to the fifth course, the sons of Melchiah. Both these houses returned in great strength from the exile, the former numbering 1052 men, while the house of Melchiah, called in Ezra's list the sons of Pashur (Melchiah's son, 1 Chro. ix. 12), numbered 1247. See Ezra ii. 37, 38.

who was *also chief governor*] Or, *who was* **deputy** *governor in the house of Jehovah.* The Nâgid or governor of the temple was the high-priest (1 Chro. ix. 11; 2 Chro. xxxi. 13; Neh. xi. 11), and Pashur was his Pâkid, *i.e.* deputy (see note on ch. i. 10). We subsequently find Zephaniah holding this office (ch. xxix. 26), and his relation to the highpriest is exactly defined in 2 K. xxv. 18; Jer. lii. 24, where he is called "the second priest." When then Pashur is called Pakid Nagid, instead of the second term being an exacter description of the first as the grammars say (Ges. § 113, Ewald § 287e), *i.e.* instead of the first term being meaningless, it defines what sort of a Nagid Pashur was. The Nagid at this time was Seraiah the highpriest, the grandson of Hilkiah (or possibly Azariah, Hilkiah's son and Jeremiah's brother, 1 Chro. vi. 13, Ezra vii. 1), and Pashur was his vicegerent.

2. *Jeremiah the prophet*] As Jeremiah is nowhere so called in the first nineteen chapters, many critics have regarded this appellation as inserted after his death, and therefore a proof of the later editing of the rest of the book. But nothing is more reasonable than that Jeremiah should in this place thus characterize himself, because it points out that Pashur's conduct was a violation of the respect due to the prophetical office.

the stocks] This instrument of torture, first mentioned in 2 Chro. xvi. 10 (A. V. *prison-house*), comes from a root signifying *to twist.* It thus implies that the body was kept in a distorted position. Paul and Silas, six centuries and a half later, suffered the same punishment at Philippi, Acts xvi. 24.

the high gate...] Rather, *the* **upper** *gate of Benjamin* **in** *the house of Jehovah.* The last words are added to distinguish it from the city gate of Benjamin leading towards the north. This was the northern gate of the inner court of the temple, usually called simply the upper gate, and was built by Jotham (2 K. xv. 35. Cp. Ezek. viii. 3, 5, ix. 2).

3. *The* LORD *hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magor-missabib*] As it is natural to suppose that there would be some play upon

4 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold *it:* and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.

[b] 2 Kin. 20. 17. 5 Moreover I [b] will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon.

6 And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies.

7 ¶ O LORD, thou hast deceived

Pashur's name, great pains have been taken to invent an etymology for it. Thus Ewald translates it *Joy around*, and Umbreit *Joy far and wide*. But every step in their process of derivation is uncertain, nor are Gesenius and Fürst more successful. On Magor-missabib see note on ch. vi. 25. Jeremiah uses it no less than five times, in ch. vi. 25, xx. 3, 10, xlvi. 5, xlix. 29, and the pl. in Lam. ii. 22, having probably adopted it as his watchword from Ps. xxxi. 13. It occurs nowhere else, and even *magor* in the rest of the Bible is only found in Isai. xxxi. 9.

4. *a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends*] The meaning of Magor-missabib is Terror exists all around: but Jeremiah plays upon it, saying that Pashur would be a terror to all around. It is remarkable that excited as were his feelings by his insulting treatment, yet he prophesies no evil of Pashur. His was to be the milder fate of being carried into captivity with Jehoiachin, and dying peaceably at Babylon, *v.* 6, whereas his successor Zephaniah was put to death at Riblah (ch. lii. 24, 27). From Babylon his house, as we have seen, returned in great strength. Wherein then did his punishment consist? Probably in this. He was one of the leading men, who, in encouraging Jehoiakim to enter upon that course which ended in the ruin of Judah, had "prophesied lies." When then he saw the dreadful slaughter of his countrymen, Jehoiakim put to death, his young son dragged into captivity, and the land stripped of all that was best, his conscience so condemned him as the guilty cause of such great misery that in the agonies of remorse he became a terror to himself and his friends.

5. *all the strength*] *All the* **stores**, everything laid up in the magazines.

the labours thereof] *i.e.* all the produce of the labour of the citizens, their gains.

6. *thou hast prophesied lies*] Pashur, as we have seen, was a patriotic man, who belonged to the warlike party, whose creed it was, that Judæa by a close alliance with Egypt might resist the arms of Assyria. Apparently he had been led away by his zeal to give himself out as invested with prophetic powers, in order to gain greater credence for his views. This would help to account for the extreme violence with which he treated Jeremiah, and would also increase the bitterness of his anguish when he saw to what a result his counsels and false predictions had led "his friends," *i.e.* his partizans.

7—18. In the rest of the chapter we have an outbreak of deep emotion, of which the first part ends in a cry of hope, *v.* 13, followed nevertheless by curses upon the day of his birth. Was this the result of feelings wounded by the indignities of a public scourging and a night spent in the stocks? Or was it not the mental agony of knowing that his ministry had (as it seemed) failed? He stands indeed before the multitudes with unbending strength, warning prince and people with unwavering constancy of the national ruin that would follow necessarily upon their sins. Before God he stood crushed by the thought that he had laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought.

It is important to notice that with this outpouring of sorrow Jeremiah's ministry virtually closed. Though he appeared again at Jerusalem towards the end of Jehoiakim's reign, yet it was no longer to say that by repentance the national ruin might be averted. During the fourth year of Jehoiakim the die was cast, and all the prophet henceforward could do, was to alleviate a punishment that was now inevitable.

7. *thou hast deceived me...*] Or, *Thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded?* The word seems, however, generally used in a bad sense of misleading a person (see 1 K. xxii. 22; Ezek. xiv. 9). What Jeremiah refers to is the joy with which he had accepted the prophetic office, ch. xv. 16, occasioned perhaps by taking the promises in ch. i. 18 too literally as a pledge that he would succeed.

me, and I was [1]deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

8 For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.

9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But *his word* was in mine heart as a [c]burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and [d]I could not *stay*.

10 ¶ For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. [†]All my familiars watched for my halting, *saying*, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.

11 But the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my

[1] Or, *nticed.*

[c] Psal. 39. 3.

[d] Job 32. 18.

[†] Heb. *Every man of my peace.*

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thou art stronger than I] Rather, *Thou hast taken hold of me.* God had taken Jeremiah in so firm a grasp that he could not escape from the necessity of prophesying. Evidently then, the prophet felt that the call came to him from without. He would have resisted, but the hand of God prevailed. On the verb *prevailed* cp. ch. iii. 5, where it is rendered *couldest*.

I am in derision daily] Lit. *I am become a laughing-stock all the day, i.e.* perpetually.

8. *I cried out, I cried*] These two verbs have little in common. The first means to complain or lament (see ch. xxx. 15), the second is to call out. Translate therefore, *For as often as I speak I must complain, I call out violence and spoil.* From the time Jeremiah began to prophesy, he has had reason for nothing but lamentation. Daily with louder voice and more desperate energy he must call out *violence and spoil*; not meaning thereby that he had been the object of popular violence, but that he had perpetually to protest against the manner in which the laws of justice were violated by powerful men among the people. See ch. v. 26—28, vii. 9, ix. 4, &c.

9. *Then I said...*] Seeing that his mission was useless, Jeremiah determined to withdraw from it.

But his word *was...*] Better, *But it was in mine heart*, &c. *His word* was added in the A. V. probably to avoid a grammatical difficulty. The first adj. *burning* is fem. to agree with *fire*, while *shut up* is masc. But it is the idiom of the Heb. language, having marked the gender once to be indifferent to it afterwards.

I was weary with forbearing] See ch. vi. 11.

I could not stay] Rather, *I prevailed not*, did not succeed. See above, *v.* 7.

10. *For I heard the defaming of many*] Rather, *the talking.* It is a quotation from Ps. xxxi. 13, and the word refers to people whispering in twos and threes apart. Such talking is sure to be malicious, but plainly here it does not mean slander, for Jeremiah gives us specimens of what they say, and we find them plotting against him. "Let us get rid of this tiresome prophet of evil." "Let us catch hold of his words." "Let us inform against him." "Let us tell our rulers of his treason." So in Mark xiv. 58 we find that our Lord's words had been talked over as traitorous, and were so regarded by the high priests. Cp. ch. xxvi. 11.

Report...and we will report it] Rather, *Do you report, and we will report* **him**: *i.e.* they encourage one another to give information against Jeremiah.

All my familiars] Lit. *the men of my peace*, a phrase taken from Ps. xli. 9. In the East the usual salutation is Peace be to thee: and the answer, And to thee peace. Thus then the phrase rather means all my acquaintance, than all my familiar friends.

watched for my halting] Or, **watch** *for my halting*, a phrase taken from Pss. xxxv. 15, xxxviii. 17. As *tsela'* also means *the side*, some translate *the keepers of my side, i.e.* those who ought to stand at my side to help me, but the rendering of the A. V. is far better.

he will be enticed] Lit. *persuaded, misled*, the word translated *deceived* in *v.* 7. So the Jews often tried to persuade our Lord to say something that might form ground of accusation against Him, *e.g.* Mark xii. 13—17.

11. *as a mighty terrible one*] Rather, *as a terrible warrior.* In ch. xv. 21 Jeremiah had the promise of being delivered from the terrible: he now feels that the mighty One (Isai. ix. 6) who is on his side is a terror to them. But whence came this revulsion of feeling? Possibly from learning that though his labours would not avert the Babylonian exile, they would prevent it from being the final ruin of the nation. More probably it was the effect of faith, enabling him to be content with calmly doing his duty, and leaving the result to God.

persecutors shall stumble, and they
[e] shall not [e] prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: *their* [f] everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

12 But, O LORD of hosts, that
[g] triest the righteous, *and* seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause.

13 Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers.

14 ¶ [h] Cursed *be* the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed.

15 Cursed *be* the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad.

16 And let that man be as the cities which the LORD [i] overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide;

17 Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*.

18 [k] Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

[e] chap. 15. 20. & 17. 18.
[f] chap. 23. 40.
[g] chap. 11. 20. & 17. 10.
[h] Job 3. 3. chap. 15. 10.
[i] Gen. 19. 25.
[k] Job 3. 20.

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they shall be greatly ashamed; for...] Rather, *they shall be greatly ashamed,* **because** *they* **have not acted wisely, with an** *everlasting* **disgrace that** *shall never be forgotten.* For the double meaning of the verb *to act wisely*, see note on ch. x. 21. The last words are not a separate clause, but amplify and explain the shame with which they were threatened just before.

12. This verse is repeated almost verbatim from ch. xi. 20.

13. *Sing unto the* LORD] Though Jeremiah's outward circumstances remained the same, he could now sing for joy, because he found peace immediately that he could leave his cause in faith to God.

14. *Cursed*] See Job iii. 3, x. 18. In comparing these passages Keil points out that Job's words are more violent and passionate, and more directly directed against God than Jeremiah's. But upon these curses see Note at end of Chapter.

15. *making him very glad*] The joy of the father in the possible future of his child is contrasted with the real future involving so great misery to the child himself. This is poetically expressed by imprecating a curse upon the man who brought the news.

16. *let him hear the cry...*] *i.e. let him hear the cry*, the sound of the lamentation, see *v.* 8, *in the morning, and the shouting*, the alarm of war, *at noontide.*

17. *Because he slew me not from the womb; or that...*] Ewald approves this rendering, but more probably the second clause is an explanation of the first. *From the womb* means *when coming from the womb,* **so that** *my mother had been my grave, and her womb always pregnant.* The expression is highly figurative, but means that Jeremiah wishes that his mother's womb had been at once his birthplace and his grave. The verb *he slew*, grammatically goes back to the man who brought the news of the birth: but this gives an unendurable rendering. The prophet does not wish the messenger to have committed murder, but that he himself had never been born. But the strangeness of the metaphor, and the inconsecutiveness of the grammar, are both in keeping with the deep mental anguish which forced from the prophet these terrible words.

18. *Wherefore...*] Cp. Job x. 18, 19.

NOTE on CHAP. XX. 14—18.

This sudden outbreak of impatience after the happy faith of *v.* 13 has led to much discussion as to Jeremiah's conduct herein. Some commentators have escaped the difficulty by putting these verses into the mouth of Pashur: others, as Ewald, endeavour to find a more fitting place for them. Others, again, think that we have here a true account of Jeremiah's mental condition, and that he fluctuated between trust in God and despair. It is in their view not "the word of Jehovah," but a simple statement of the prophet's human feelings, involving much that was sinful, and much more that was frail and infirm. Umbreit, again, thinks that these verses were a poem written in some period of depression, and added here after the prophet had attained to a happier state of mind, as a memento of emotions from which he had escaped. Calvin condemns the prophet for using such words, and says he was guilty of serious sin and contumely against God in thus cursing the day

of his birth, but so far excuses him that it was not for worldly trouble such as that which raised Job's anger, but because the word of God was set at nought. But possibly there was more of sorrow in the words than of impatience. As Jeremiah looked back upon his mission now over, and felt that in spite of all his efforts Judah's day of grace had passed, Would God, he cries, that I had never been born to see that, against which I have so long struggled, become inevitable! Had I perished in the womb, God would have chosen some other prophet: he might not have succeeded better, but I should have been saved this sad sight. I should not have felt as I feel now that the earnest labour of a life has been in vain.

Yet the form of the expression is fierce and indignant. Possibly Jeremiah did imagine that he had neither met with that outward respect, nor with that measure of success, and even of acceptance with God, which had encouraged other prophets. No miracle had ever given proof of his authority to speak in Jehovah's name: no prediction had as yet been verified. Such thoughts were wrong and sinful, and the impatience of Jeremiah is that part of his character which is most open to blame. Though we admire him as a man, who in spite of opposition from without, and the despondency of his own natural disposition, always did his duty, yet he attains not to the level of the teaching of the New Testament. Still less does he reach to that elevation which is set before us by Him who is the perfect pattern of all righteousness. Our Lord was a prophet whose mission to the men of His generation equally failed, and his sorrow was even more deep. But it broke forth in no imprecations. "Jesus beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day!" (Luke xix. 41, 42.)

These imprecations, nevertheless, were not placed at the end of Jehoiakim's roll without a purpose. That roll was the prophet's last appeal. Jeremiah's public ministrations were now for a time to cease, and after this there would be a long and ominous silence. If the heart of the king and princes could be reached Jerusalem might even yet be saved. Now in this record of Jeremiah's sorrow and mental conflicts they might at all events have seen that he had no pleasure in predicting evil, but acted from a deep conviction and sense of duty: nor had he sought the office of prophet, but had been compelled to undertake it. Who can tell what effect this proof of the prophet's truthfulness might have had upon the king's mind had he read it! But Jehoiakim would not even give himself the chance of being convinced by God's message. "When Jehudi had read three or four leaves, the king cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the hearth, until all the roll was consumed" (ch. xxxvi. 23).

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah to enquire the event of Nebuchadrezzar's war.* 3 *Jeremiah foretelleth a hard siege and miserable captivity.* 8 *He counselleth the people to fall to the Chaldeans,* 11 *and upbraideth the king's house.*

JEREMIAH'S THIRTEENTH PROPHECY.
Chaps. xxi.—xxiv.

Zedekiah's Roll.

With the last verse of ch. xx. ended the roll of Jehoiakim: with the first verse of ch. xxi. begins a digest of various prophecies addressed to Zedekiah in his ninth year, and therefore called by Ewald Zedekiah's roll. His account of it is so probable that we can do no better than accept his statements. The occasion then of this prophecy was the embassy sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah, asking his prayers when the Chaldæan army was advancing to commence the siege of Jerusalem. So clearly did the prophet foresee the result of that siege as well as the causes that had led to it, that he could give the king no hope, but gathered into one all those passages in his previous prophecies which bore upon the conduct of those who were the leaders of the people—the kings, priests, and prophets—that he might shew with whom the guilt of the nation's ruin lay.

Naturally therefore the roll divides itself into two parts, in the first of which, chs. xx—xxii., the prophet reviews the conduct of the royal house. King after king passes by in succession, and is condemned. But from earthly kings the prophet rises to the true seed of David, Jehovah our righteousness, who is the sole comfort of His people in troubled times, and whose hope could alone sustain men's hearts when the earthly kingdom was passing away, ch. xxiii. 1—8.

In the second part, ch. xxiii. 9—xxiv., we have first the conduct of the priests and prophets reviewed, ch. xxiii. 9—40, in which Jeremiah speaks with peculiar warmth, as though he was expressing thoughts which had long troubled his mind. Nothing can be more vigorous than the way in which in *vv.* 9—24 he dashes to the ground the false prophets and their followers; nothing more thorough than the penetration with which in *vv.* 25—40 he sharply refutes their pretexts and erroneous notions.

And here strictly the roll might have ended,

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him Pashur the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying,

2 Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

3 ¶ Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah:

4 Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city.

5 And I myself will fight against you with an [a] outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. [a] Exod. 6. 6.

6 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence.

7 And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the

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but Jeremiah adds to it a vision, ch. xxiv., in which he shews the pitiable condition of Zedekiah and his people. They are but the refuse of a basket of fruit too bad to be eaten, and which must therefore be thrown away, because every day they only become more offensive. That man was no coward who could address to a living king and the people, among whom he was dwelling, so contemptuous a reproof, and we cannot wonder that we find him henceforward a prisoner, and saved from death only by the vacillation of Zedekiah, who had that kind of feeble conscientiousness which, though it never makes a man do right, yet does make him occasionally stop short of the perpetration of downright wrong.

CHAP. XXI. 1. *when king Zedekiah sent unto him*] See also ch. xxxvii. 3. By sending this embassy the king acknowledged that Jeremiah held the same position in the kingdom which Isaiah had held under Hezekiah, 2 K. xix. 2. The embassy consisted of men of the highest rank, Pashur the head of the priestly family of Melchiah, and Zephaniah, called here the priest, but who more exactly was "the second priest," see ch. lii. 24, where we find that he was one of those put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. We gather from this that he belonged to the party who were for resisting Nebuchadnezzar by force of arms, and we learn the same of Pashur, from his being one of those who endeavoured to persuade Zedekiah to put Jeremiah to death as a traitor (ch. xxxviii. 1, 4).

2. *Nebuchadrezzar*] This way of spelling the name, as we might expect in one personally acquainted with the Chaldæans, is more correct than Nebuchadnezzar, which nevertheless became finally the current form among the Jews, and as such is used by Jeremiah, ch. xxxiv. 1, xxxix. 5, and even by Daniel. In the cylinders it is written *Nabu-kudurri-uzur*, which Prof. Rawlinson explains as *Nebo protects the landmarks* ('Ancient Monarchies,' III. 80). Schrader, 'Die Keilinschr. u. das A. Test.,' p. 235, translates *Nebo, do thou protect the crown*, and Oppert now approves of this rendering. But in the 'Zeitschrift d. morg. Gesellsch.' XVI. 487, Scheuchzer writes it *Nabu-sod-rossor*, and translates *Fire the shining God*.

according to all his wondrous works] Both the king and his envoys expected some such answer as Isaiah had given on a former occasion (Isai. xxxvii. 6), and probably were greatly incensed with Jeremiah for not aiding them in the defence of the city by giving them similar words of encouragement.

4. *without the walls*] These words are to be joined to *wherewith ye fight*, and not to *which besiege you*. A siege is over when the enemy gets within the walls. It is important to notice this, as it fixes the time when the embassy came. It was upon the first approach of the Chaldæan army, while Zedekiah's forces were still in the field, endeavouring to keep their communications open and to harass the enemy when taking up his position and commencing his works. Instead then of putting a bridle into Nebuchadnezzar's lips as he had into those of Sennacherib, to "turn him back by the way by which he came" (Isai. xxxvii. 29), the prophet declares that God will turn back their weapons and *assemble them, i.e.* gather *them*, into the city to perish there.

6. *a great pestilence*] Apparently this broke out at an early part of the siege, and was the result of the excessive crowding of men and animals in a confined space with all sanitary regulations utterly neglected. Cp. the account in Thuc. of the siege of Athens, II. 52.

pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

8 ¶ And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

9 He that [b] abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and [c] his life shall be unto him for a prey.

10 For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

11 ¶ And touching the house of the king of Judah, *say*, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

12 O house of David, thus saith the LORD; [d] † Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the oppres-

[b] chap. 38. 2.

[c] chap. 39. 18. & 45. 5.

[d] chap. 22. 3. † Heb. *Judge.*

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7. *he shall not spare them*] Cp. ch. lii. 10, 27.

8. *the way of life, and the way of death*] In this as in the foregoing verses Jeremiah had the words of Deuteronomy (ch. xxx. 19) present in his mind, but there it was the choice between a life blessed with Jehovah's favour and a death in sin: here it is the miserable alternative of a life saved by desertion to the enemy, or a death by famine, pestilence, and the sword within the walls.

9. *he that...falleth to the Chaldeans*] This was to counsel desertion, and so to do would have been treason in an ordinary man: for it is not the duty of an ordinary man to decide whether the enemy shall be resisted or not, but of the rulers. But the prophets spoke with an authority above that even of the king, and constantly we find them interfering in political matters with summary decisiveness. See note on ch. xxxviii. 4.

Notice that our Lord also commanded his Church to quit Jerusalem when the Romans were about to besiege it (Matt. xxiv. 16), and to take none of their goods with them (ib. 17, 18). They were however to flee to a place of refuge.

his life shall be unto him for a prey] A prey is something not a man's own, upon which he seizes in the midst of danger, and hurries away with it. So must the Jews hurry away with their lives as something more than they had a right to, and place them in the Chaldæan camp as in a place of safety.

11. With *v.* 10, the answer to the embassy of Zedekiah ended. What follows is a summary of prophecies probably of older date, and sent perhaps in the first instance privately to the king in the hope that they might influence his heart, and so gain for him milder treatment from the Chaldæans. This appendix begins with two prophecies relating to the kings generally, xxi. 11—14, xxii. 1—9, followed by special judgments relating to Shallum, 10—12, Jehoiakim, 13—19, and Jehoiachin, 20—30, while Zedekiah is passed over in contemptuous silence, and in his place we have Jehovah Zidkenu, the Lord our righteousness. The first of these royal prophecies probably belongs to the commencement of the reign of Jehoiakim, before he had shewn the daring violence of his character by murdering Urijah (ch. xxvi. 23), and would thus be contemporary with ch. xvii. 19—27. It is an appeal to the house of David to reign justly, in which case the nation might yet be saved.

And touching the house of the king of Judah, say] Rather, *And as to the royal house of Judah, Hear ye.* The inserted *say* is entirely wrong. The words are no command to the prophet, but form his introduction to the discourse which extends to the end of ch. xxiii. 8. The king and his officers are to hear what Jehovah has spoken touching the conduct of the rulers: not any new message just revealed to the prophet, but the gist of all the messages sent to the royal house since the accession of Jehoiakim.

12. *Execute judgment*] Lit. *Judge judgment, i.e.* execute the duties of a judge righteously. The highest duty of kings is the administration of justice, and as this was performed in old time in person, the weal of the people depended to a great degree upon the personal qualities of the king (see 2 S. xv. 4).

in the morning] This was the time when kings sat in judgment, as owing to the midday heat nothing could be done at noon (2 S. iv. 5).

deliver him that is *spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor*] As the oppressor was generally some powerful noble, it was especially the king's duty to see that the weaker members of the community were not wronged.

sor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

13 Behold, I *am* against thee, O † inhabitant of the valley, *and* rock of the plain, saith the LORD; which say, Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations?

† Heb. *inhabitress.*

14 But I will † punish you according to the ‘ fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it.

† Heb. *visit upon.* ‘ Prov. 1. 31.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *He exhorteth to repentance, with promises and threats.* 10 *The judgment of Shallum,* 13 *of Jehoiakim,* 20 *and of Coniah.*

THUS saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word,

2 And say, Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates:

3 Thus saith the LORD; ª Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

ª chap. 21. 12.

4 For if ye do this thing indeed, ᵇ then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting † upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

ᵇ chap. 17. 25. † Heb. *for David upon his throne.*

5 But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation.

6 For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah; Thou *art* Gilead unto me, *and* the head

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13. *O inhabitant of the valley*, and *rock of the plain*] *Inhabitant* is fem., the population of Jerusalem being always personified as a woman, the daughter of Zion. Also omit the *and*. Jerusalem is at once a valley and a rock (see ch. xvii. 3). Considered with reference to the higher mountains which encircle it (Ps. cxxv. 2) it is a valley, for which reason Isaiah calls it "the valley of vision" (Isai. xxii. 1, 5), and Jehovah is said to "dwell between Benjamin's shoulders" (Deut. xxxiii. 12). But when approached from the south-west the hill of Zion seems to rise up abruptly, and may then be described as a rock situated on a plain, *i.e.* on the level ground running north and south. See Robinson, 'Bib. Res.' I. 389. In the rest of the verse the people are described as priding themselves on the impregnability of their city.

14. *I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof*] Palestine is not a well-wooded country, but the Jew had a true eye for the magnificence of nature, and a forest suggested to him the idea of everything grand and stately. So Isaiah (ch. x. 34) compares Sennacherib and his army to a forest, and in the next chapter Jeremiah says to the royal house, Thou art a Gilead unto me, a very Lebanon summit (ch. xxii. 6). Commentators have made a difficulty here, simply from not remembering the delight which the Jews had in trees.

CHAP. XXII. 1. *Thus saith the* LORD] This prophecy, *vv.* 1—9, is of the same general import as the preceding (ch. xxi. 11—14), for it states the conditions upon which it was still possible for the house of David to ensure a long era of prosperity. It belongs therefore to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, and was spoken in the gates of his palace.

Go down] *i.e.* from the temple to the king's house. Cp. 2 Chro. xxiii. 20.

2. *these gates*] As the open space at these gates was the place where the king administered justice, Jehoiakim would probably be there in person surrounded by his court and the people. It was thus the appropriate place for the exhortation which follows.

3. *Execute ye judgment*] Not the word used in ch. xxi. 12, but one signifying *Do ye justice, do ye what is just and right*. The word for *oppressor* is irregular, but Jeremiah uses a similar form in ch. iii. 7.

do no wrong] *i.e.* do no wrong to the stranger, &c., the order in the Hebrew being, *and a stranger, an orphan, and a widow, do not oppress, do not illtreat.*

4. Cp. ch. xvii. 25.

his people] Not his retinue, but his lieges. It describes the general prosperity of the land.

5. Cp. ch. xvii. 27.

I swear by myself] Cp. note on Deut. xxxii. 40—42.

6. *Thou* art *Gilead unto me*, and *the head...*] The *and* must be omitted. *Thou art a Gilead unto me, a summit of Lebanon.* There is pro-

of Lebanon: *yet* surely I will make thee a wilderness, *and* cities *which* are not inhabited.

7 And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast *them* into the fire.

8 And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, [c] Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city?

9 Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

10 ¶ Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: *but* weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

[c] Deut. 29. 24. 1 Kin. 9. 8.

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bably no book so full of passages in praise of the beauty of nature as the Bible. Thus Gilead is extolled for its aromatic plants (ch. viii. 22), its grassy uplands where the goats feed (Song of Sol. iv. 1, vi. 5), and one district of it, Bashan, for its sheep (Deut. xxxii. 14), its noble breed of cattle (Ps. xxii. 12), its general fertility (Isai. xxxiii. 9; Nahum i. 4), and especially for its splendid oak-forests (Isai. ii. 13; Zech. xi. 2). Lebanon is the usual metaphor for everything of surpassing magnificence, but it is also praised for its snows (ch. xviii. 14), its firs and cedars (Isai. xxxvii. 24), its waving forest (Ps. lxxii. 16), its wealth of springs (Song of Sol. iv. 15), its flowers (Nah. i. 4), and its sweet scents (Song of Sol. iv. 11; Hos. xiv. 6, 7). Jeremiah can find nothing nobler to which he may compare the kingly house of David.

yet *surely*] Lit. *if not*, the form of an oath with the imprecation omitted: fully, *if I do not make thee a wilderness, may....* The full form may be seen in Num. xiv. 23.

a wilderness, and *cities*] The *and* should be omitted. Jeremiah according to his custom suddenly drops his metaphor and gives his meaning. If the house of David does not hear God's words, though it be now grand as Lebanon, God will made it a wilderness, even uninhabited cities, the house of David being regarded as equivalent to the kingdom of Judah.

7. *I will prepare*] *i.e.* **consecrate**, see ch. vi. 4, and cp. Isai. xiii. 3.

thy choice cedars] The metaphor of Lebanon is resumed, and the chief members of the royal lineage and the leading officers of state are compared to its choice trees.

8, 9. Cp. Deut. xxix. 24—26.

10—12. In the two foregoing prophecies Jeremiah stated the general principle on which depend the rise and downfall of kings and nations. He now adds for Zedekiah's warning the history of three thrones which were not established.

The first is that of Jehoahaz the successor of Josiah. We find that he was two years younger than Jehoiakim (2 K. xxiii. 31, 36), but thirteen years older than Zedekiah (ib. xxiv. 18). On comparing therefore the accounts in the book of Kings with the genealogy in 1 Chro. iii. 15 it is at once evident that he cannot be the Shallum there mentioned, and placed fourth after Zedekiah. But neither is it probable that he was omitted, so that he must be identical with the Johanan, who appears there as Josiah's firstborn. Not that he was so literally, but in a legal sense only, as having enjoyed the rights of primogeniture in being chosen Josiah's successor. Possibly Josiah on leaving Jerusalem to fight with Pharaoh-Necho had appointed him ruler in his absence, and the people confirmed his father's choice. Whereupon Jehoiakim, indignant at a younger brother being preferred before him, joined the Egyptians, and was upon their conquest of Jerusalem made by them king.

But why is he called Shallum? We may dismiss as unsatisfactory all those explanations which find the answer in the meaning of the word. Probably his real name was Shallum, and the fact that we find another Shallum in Josiah's family is no difficulty. Each of the king's many wives probably called her children after her own fancy. On being made king, Shallum took the name Jehoahaz, *i.e. Jehovah shall help.* But God did not help him, and it may be that in Egypt in his humiliation he found mercy and acceptance, and took the name of Johanan or John, *i.e. Jehovah is gracious.* But Jeremiah passes by both names, the first because Shallum bore it only three months, the second as a name assumed in Egypt and not well known at Jerusalem. Subsequently in the book of Chronicles the names appear as they were taken from the genealogies preserved in the domestic records of the several families.

For the custom of Hebrew women giving names to their children, see the example of Jacob's wives, also 1 S. i. 20, 1 Chro. iv. 9, vii. 16, Luke i. 60. The father nevertheless was the final authority, Gen. xxxv. 18, Luke i. 62, and cp. 2 S. xii. 24, 1 Chro. vii. 23.

10. *Weep ye not for the dead*] *i.e.* for Josiah. We learn from 2 Chro. xxxv. 25 that the custom long continued of making an annual lamentation for his loss.

11 For thus saith the LORD touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more:

12 But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

13 ¶ Woe unto [d] him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; *that* useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

14 That saith, I will build me a wide house and [†] large chambers, and cutteth him out [‖] windows; and *it is* cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

15 Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judg-

[d] Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. Hab. 2. 9.

[†] Heb. *through-aired.*

[‖] Or, *my windows.*

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that goeth away] Rather, *that is gone away.* So the present participle *reigning* is rightly translated *which reigned*, in *v.* 11.

11. *king of Judah*] This belongs to Shallum, just as the title *the priest*, in ch. xxi. 1, belongs to Zephaniah.

13. *Woe unto him*, &c.] Far worse is the second example. Though the account given of Jehoahaz shews that he did not begin his reign well (2 K. xxiii. 32), yet he was no heartless tyrant like Jehoiakim, who lived in splendour amid the misery of the nation, amused himself with building palaces when the whole land was ground down by heavy taxation, and perished miserably at the age of thirty-six, so little cared for that his body was cast aside without burial.

his chambers] Really, *his* **upper** *chambers.* From the absence of machinery the raising of materials for the upper stories was a difficult task, especially when massive stones were used.

that *useth his neighbour's service without wages*] This explains the *unrighteousness* and *wrong* spoken of in the former part of the verse. At a time when the people could scarcely pay the tribute to Pharaoh, Jehoiakim exacted forced labour from them to build him a splendid palace. Even in Solomon's time, and though he had laid the burden chiefly on those not of Israelitish blood (2 Chro. ii. 17, 18), yet it was chiefly forced labour which caused the troubles of his later years, and made ten of the tribes revolt from his son.

giveth him not for his work] *Giveth him not his* **wages.** See Job vii. 2. Possibly, even in the case of forced labour it was usual to give some wages, and not food only.

14. *a wide house*] Lit. *a house of dimensions*, see Num. xiii. 32; Isai. xlv. 14, where the A.V. has *stature.*

large chambers] *i.e. spacious* **upper** *chambers* for state occasions. There is no sufficient authority for the translation given in the margin, *through-aired.*

cutteth him out windows] The verb used here has already been explained in ch. iv. 30, where it is used of widening the eyes with antimony. So here it means *he maketh him wide windows.* On חלוני see Note at end of Chapter.

and it is *cieled*] Rather, **roofing** *it.* See 1 K. vi. 9, vii. 3, and for this use of the inf. ch. vii. 9. See also Note at end of Chapter.

vermilion] *i.e.* red sulphuret of mercury, the pigment which gives the deep red colour still bright and untarnished on many ancient buildings.

15. *Shalt thou reign...?*] *i.e.* Will thy buildings make thy reign continue? These words imply that Jehoiakim was looking forward to and taking measures to secure a long continuance of power. Now it is exceedingly probable that Habakkuk, in ch. ii. 9—13, referred to Jehoiakim's lust of building, and that some of the edifices he erected were fortifications, put up with the view of revolting from the Chaldæans—for such perhaps is the meaning of being "delivered from the palm of evil" (Hab. ii. 9 marg.). Two things then follow, the first that Jehoiakim's object in building was to strengthen his power: the second that Jeremiah probably wrote this prophecy before Jehoiakim revolted (2 K. xxiv. 1). So in *v.* 17 we find him in the full unchecked tide of his arrogancy. But he was no man to have permitted such a prophecy to be spoken with impunity in Jerusalem, and therefore, probably it belongs to the same date as ch. xxxvi. 30, written in the interval between Nebuchadnezzar's first conquest of Jerusalem, and Jehoiakim's rebellion, and when Jeremiah was out of the reach of the tyrant's power.

because thou closest thyself *in cedar*] Rather, *because thou* **viest** *in cedar.* This is the sense regularly given to this verb by the LXX. and Vulg.; see also ch. xii. 5, where the meaning is certain. The person with whom Jeremiah supposes Jehoiakim to vie would be Solomon. The translation of the Vulg. *because thou viest with the cedar*, *i.e.* Josiah, has nothing to recommend it: nor the rendering of the LXX. *because thou viest with Ahaz*, though there is a slight plausibility in the reading of the Codex Alex. *with Ahab*, inasmuch as he did build a palace (1 K. xxii. 39).

did not thy father eat and drink] *i.e.* he was prosperous and enjoyed life (Eccles. ii. 24,

ment and justice, *and* then *it was* well with him?

16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then *it was* well *with him: was* not this to know me? saith the LORD.

17 But thine eyes and thine heart *are* not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for ‖violence, to do *it*.

‖ Or, *incursion.*

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!

19 He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

20 ¶ Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed.

21 I spake unto thee in thy †prosperity; *but* thou saidst, I will not

† Heb. *prosperities.*

iii. 13, viii. 15, ix. 7). There is a contrast between the calm life of Josiah spent in the discharge of his kingly duties, and the hot zeal of Jehoiakim, busy with ambitious plans of splendour and aggrandisement.

16. was *not this to know me?*] Cp. James i. 27; John vii. 17.

17. *for thy covetousness*] Lit. *for thy gain.* Besides exacting forced labour Jehoiakim, to procure the necessary means for the vast expenses he incurred, put innocent people on various pretexts to death, and escheated their property.

for violence] Lit. *for crushing.* The translation given in the margin, *incursion*, belongs to a word which comes from a different root, and is rendered *course* in ch. viii. 6, xxiii. 10. It is altogether to be rejected.

18. *concerning Jehoiakim*] Boldly by name is the judgment at length pronounced upon him. So fierce a despot now, feared and dreaded by all around him, he shall soon lie an unheeded corpse, with no one to lament him. The words *Ah my brother!* refer to the love of relatives; none such shall grieve over him; nor shall he have the respect of his subjects saying *Ah lord!* or, *Ah his glory!* In the words *Ah sister!* the prophet is not thinking of Jehoiakim, but means generally such wailing as when a brother or sister is carried to the grave.

19. *the burial of an ass*] *i.e.* he shall merely be dragged out of the way, and left to decay unheeded.

This prophecy is repeated in ch. xxxvi. 30, but of its fulfilment we know nothing. The prophet however would not have inserted it in Zedekiah's roll, unless the circumstances of Jehoiakim's death had been such as to give full weight to his present warning. The only records, however, which we possess are, that "he slept with his fathers" (2 K. xxiv. 6), a phrase which simply means that he died, being used of Ahab who was killed in battle (1 K. xxii. 40); but that previously Nebuchadnezzar had put him in chains in order to take him to Babylon (2 Chro. xxxvi. 6). We also find that in the three months between his seizure and the removal of the captives Jeconiah was king. Most probably, therefore, he died soon after he had been thrown into chains, either of pestilence or of a broken heart, and his body was dragged away without any marks of respect. Nothing is even said of his having been buried. Less probable accounts are given by Keil, and by Ewald, 'Gesch. Isr.' III. i. 430.

20. *Go up to Lebanon, and cry*] The prophet's grief on reaching his third example of thrones falling through unrighteousness is not simply on Jehoiachin's account. Sad as it was to see three kings in less than twelve years fall from the summit of human grandeur into abject misery, it was still more sad to see the misery occasioned by Jehoiakim's fatal policy, to which, as it seems, Jehoiachin had adhered (2 K. xxiv. 9). For with Jehoiachin all the best and noblest of the land were dragged from their homes to people the void places of Babylon.

the passages] Really, **Abarim**, a range of mountains to the south of Gilead opposite Jericho, see Num. xxvii. 12; Deut. xxxii. 49. Jeremiah names the chief ranges of mountains, which overlook the route from Jerusalem to Babylon, in regular order, beginning with Lebanon upon the north, thence coming to Bashan on the north-east, and ending with Abarim on the south-east. As this range was the nearest to the holy city it seems that it was not the miserable procession of king and nobles going in chains into captivity, which was to rouse the cries of the people, but the approach of the Chaldæan army to execute this terrible judgment.

thy lovers] *i.e.* the nations in alliance with Judah, especially Egypt. See ch. xxv. 19—25. The defeat of Egypt at Carchemish, ch. xlvi. 2, gave all western Asia into the power of Nebuchadnezzar. Ewald explains it of Judah's kings, but his reasons are far-fetched.

21. *in thy prosperity*] The word is pl.,

hear. This *hath been* thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.

22 The wind shall eat up all thy pastors, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.

† Heb. *inhabitress.*

23 O †inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail!

24 *As* I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;

25 And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand *of them* whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.

27 But to the land whereunto they †desire to return, thither shall they not return.

† Heb. *lift up their mind.*

28 *Is* this man Coniah a despised broken idol? *is he* a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?

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because God spake thus not once only, but whenever Judah was at peace. The word literally means *quietness*, Prov. xvii. 1, and thence *a state of security*, Ps. xxx. 6, where see note.

22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors*] Lit. *shall depasture thy pastors.* See note on ch. ii. 16. Those who used to drive their flocks to consume the herbage shall themselves be the first prey of war. On the east wind parching up the grass, see ch. iv. 12, xviii. 17. The *pastors* mean not the kings only, but all in authority.

23. *O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars*] As we saw on *v.* 6, *Lebanon* is the usual metaphor for anything splendid, and is here put for Jerusalem, but with especial reference to the kings whose pride it was to dwell in palaces roofed with cedar, see *v.* 14; 1 K. vii. 2, 3. (For the interesting fem. forms ישבתי and מקננתי, see note on ch. x. 17.)

how gracious shalt thou be] **How wilt thou groan!** See Note at end of Chapter.

24. *Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah*] The words *king of Judah* belong to Coniah, see *v.* 11, and prove that he was king regnant when the prophet wrote. It is remarkable that the prophet gives him the name by which he was known when in a private station, 1 Chro. iii. 16, as he had done previously with Jehoahaz. These two kings bore their royal names for so short a time that they probably never got into general use. The official name *Yehoyachin* is found in 2 K. xxiv. 6, &c.; 2 Chro. xxxvi. 8; Jer. lii. 31, and is contracted into *Yoyachin*, Ezek. i. 2; his private name *Yeconyahu* in Jer. xxiv. 1, abbreviated into *Yeconyah* in ch. xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2; 1 Chro. iii. 16; Esther ii. 6; and into *Conyahu*, here, and in *v.* 28, and xxxvii. 1. All signify the same, *Jehovah foundeth*, and no importance is to be attached (with Hengst. 'Christol.' II. 402) to the omission in *Conyahu* of the first syllable.

the signet] was not merely a costly jewel, but was the badge of office, and like the great seal now, its impress denoted the sovereign pleasure. To part with it, was to part with the royal authority. It is used therefore of anything excessively precious. See Hagg. ii. 23.

26. *thy mother*] She is mentioned as being the *Gebirah*, the great lady, see ch. xiii. 18. She bore this rank, not as Henderson thinks, as queen-dowager, but as queen-mother. It was her relationship, not to the dead king, but to the king regnant, which made her powerful.

27. *whereunto they desire to return*] Rather, *whereunto they lift up their soul.* See notes on Ps. xxiv. 4; Prov. xix. 18. The verb however in this place is in a form expressing a more intense desire. In Deut. xxiv. 15; Hos. iv. 8, the sense is better given by our phrase *setting the heart upon.*

28. *a despised broken idol*] Rather, *a despised broken vessel.* The next clause explains this. Is Coniah a mere piece of common earthenware in which the potter has no pleasure, *i.e.* dislikes it and therefore despises and breaks it? It is a lamentation over Jehoiachin's hard fate, and that of his seed. Nägelsb. regards this and the two following verses as written after the king had been carried into captivity. This may have been the case, as the prophecy as a whole belongs to Zedekiah's time, but his reason, viz. that the tenses are præterites, is insufficient: for the prophets regularly use the past tense in their predictions.

29 O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

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29. *O earth, earth, earth*] Cp. ch. vii. 4.

30. *childless*] Not necessarily in the sense of *no children having* been born to him, but as explained afterwards in having no child to sit on David's throne. Still there is no proof that Jehoiachin ever had children. None are mentioned in 2 K. xxiv. 15, nor does it follow from the account there of his wives that he was eighteen years of age (ib. *v.* 8 compared with 2 Chro. xxxvi. 9), as the harem of his father would belong to him. A son Assir apparently is mentioned in 1 Chro. iii. 17, but the word possibly belongs to the father, who is thus called *Jeconiah the bound*. If it had become the regular title of Jeconiah the absence of the article would be explained. See note there. Finally when Evil-Merodach took him from his prison after thirty-seven years of confinement he probably perished with his benefactor, who was murdered after a reign of two years. See note on 2 K. xxv. 27. He appears however in the Apocrypha as husband of Susanna, and as living in great wealth at Babylon.

Whether childless or not, Jeconiah was the last king of David's line. His uncle indeed actually reigned after him, but perished with his sons long before Jeconiah's death (ch. lii. 10). In the legal genealogies Salathiel (Hebr. Shealtiel) who was descended from David through his son Nathan is counted as his son, but neither he nor Zerubbabel "prospered so as to sit on David's throne." And gradually their descendants became so insignificant as to be but a "cut down tree," Isai. xi. 1, and a "dry ground," ib. liii. 2. When from this uncrowned lineage Christ had come, and the growing strength of Christianity had aroused the jealous fears of Domitian, he caused a search to be made for the descendants of David; but when they were brought before him they proved to be such simple country people that he despised them and let them go (Eus. 'Eccl. Hist.' III. 20). So exactly was the prediction fulfilled. Of Jeconiah's seed, legal or natural, no man of ability ever appears in the pages of history: and yet from so dead a trunk, from a family so utterly fallen, that spiritual King came forth whose name is Jehovah our righteousness.

NOTES on CHAP. XXII. 14, 23.

14. The form חַלּוֹנַי is very difficult. It gives no sense in its literal rendering *my windows* (see marg.), nor can it be an irregular plural form, as Gesenius thought, or a dual (=a double window, a window opening in the middle), as Ewald supposed. Keil argues that it is an adj., *he wideneth him a windowy, i.e.* house, a house abounding with windows; but the omission of *house* is fatal to such an idea. The simplest emendation is that suggested by J. D. Michaelis, and supported by some slight MS. authority, namely, to withdraw the ו in וְסָפוּן, and read חַלּוֹנָיו, *his windows*. In that case we must also read סָפוּן, making it an inf. like מָשׁוֹחַ. This clause must then be translated *roofing it with cedar and painting with vermilion*.

23. *How gracious shalt thou be!* If we take the verb with the A.V. as Niph. of חנן, it would mean *how pitiable wilt thou be!* But no other examples of this form can be found, and the versions all translate *how wilt thou groan! i.e.* they take the word in the Heb. text as גְּנַחְתִּי for נֶאֱנַחְתִּי from the root אנח.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *He prophesieth a restoration of the scattered flock.* 5 *Christ shall rule and save them.* 9 *Against false prophets,* 33 *and mockers of the true prophets.*

[a] WOE be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. [a] Ezek. 34. 2.

2 Therefore thus saith the LORD

CHAP. XXIII. 1. *Woe be unto the pastors*] Or, *Woe* **unto shepherds**, *i.e.* civil rulers, see ch. ii. 8. Jeremiah has now reviewed the fortunes of three evil kings, and from their punishment pronounces a woe upon all unrighteous rulers whatsoever.

the sheep of my pasture] Lit. *of my pasturing*, the sheep of whom I am shepherd. The people do not belong to the rulers but to God, who sets over them shepherds that they may keep the sheep. If they neglect their duties, and by selfishly seeking their own good, de-

God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

3 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

[b] chap. 3. 15. Ezek. 34. 11, 12.

4 And I will set up [b] shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

5 ¶ Behold, [c] the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

[c] Isai. 4. 2. & 40. 11. chap. 33. 14, 15. Dan. 9. 24. John 1. 45.

6 [d] In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:

[d] Deut. 33. 28.

stroy and scatter the sheep, God will dismiss them from their office as He now dismissed the royal lineage of David.

2. *the pastors that feed my people*] The article is now prefixed to pastors, because this is the application of what was spoken generally in *v.* 1.

Ye have scattered...] They had scattered them first spiritually by leading them into idolatry, so that instead of one fold worshipping one God, there were folds many, and gods many. But secondly, many had literally been taken to Egypt with Jehoahaz, many in Jehoiakim's time had fled thither, while others fell away to the Chaldæans: and finally the best of the land had been carried to Babylon with Jeconiah.

and driven them away] *i.e. ye have made them outcasts.* In the East shepherds never drive their flocks, but go before them (John x. 4, 5). The real force of the verb is seen in Isai. xi. 12, xvi. 4, where the pass. part. is translated *outcasts.*

have not visited them] *i.e.* have taken no oversight of them, have not concerned yourselves about their conduct.

3. *the remnant*] While there is no promise of restoration for the kings, there is for the people, because they had been led astray by their rulers. Yet it is only a remnant, see ch. iv. 27.

I have driven them] The evil shepherds drove the people into exile by leading them into sin: and God by inflicting punishment. The same act may be referred to God or to man, according to the light in which we regard it.

their folds] Or, *their* **pastures**. See Note on ch. vi. 2.

they shall be fruitful...] Cp. ch. iii. 16.

4. *I will set up shepherds...*] The rulers are no longer to be hereditary, of the seed of David, but men like Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Maccabees, raised up specially by God to govern them. It is a revocation of the promise made to David, 2 S. vii. 12—16, as far as the earthly throne was concerned.

they shall fear no more...] The effect of good government will be a sense of general security. The people will no longer be like sheep neglected by the shepherds, and left to be the prey of wild beasts.

neither shall they be lacking] For the verb used here, see note on ch. iii. 16. It is a different conjugation of the verb translated *visited* in *v.* 2, and means, that not one sheep shall be missing, or lost.

5. *Behold, the days come*] Lit. *Behold, days are coming.* It is that indefinite time, when the great hope of the nation is to be fulfilled, and when what had only been partially accomplished under rulers like Ezra and Nehemiah will be fully accomplished under a king raised up from David's line. Even with the temporal kingship abolished, David's mercies are still sure.

a righteous Branch] Or, *sprout, germ*, see note on Isai. iv. 2. A tree has many branches, and these can be pruned away without killing the tree, but the sprout is that in which the root springs up and grows, and which, if it be destroyed, makes the root perish also. For its use, see Gen. xix. 25; Isai. lxi. 11, in both of which places it springs directly out of the ground; also Ezek. xvi. 7, xvii. 9; Hos. viii. 7; where it is translated either *bud* or *spring.* For *netzer*, the other word translated *branch*, see Isai. xi. 1. A branch never does grow out of a root, but only from the trunk.

and a King shall reign...] Rather, *and* **he shall reign as king.** The germ, in whom the dethroned house of David shall again spring up, shall reign right royally, and *prosper*, cp. Isai. lii. 13. Note that both prophets apply the same attributes to the Messiah: and that, according to the manner of the prophets, Jeremiah predicts contraries. David's family is to be dethroned (temporally), that it may reign gloriously (spiritually). But cp. the notes on ch. xxxiii. 17, 26.

shall execute judgment and justice] As David did, 2 S. viii. 15, to which place Jeremiah evidently refers.

6. *Israel shall dwell safely*] *i.e.* the pro-

and this *is* his name whereby he
[Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu.*] shall be called, [†]THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[chap. 16. 14, 15.] 7 Therefore, behold, [‡]the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

8 But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

9 ¶ Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness.

10 For the land is full of adul-

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mise made to Israel in Deut. xxxiii. 28 shall be fulfilled, and not Judah only, but the ten tribes also shall dwell safely, lit. *in confidence, securely*, under the sceptre of the Messiah.

this is *his name whereby he shall be called*] The vowels are here uncertain. The usual reading is, *he shall call him, i.e.* either "God shall call him," or, better, "one shall call him," indefinitely, of which the force is well given in the A.V. Many MSS. however read *they shall call*, but as this is the more natural reading, it probably arises from carelessness, whereas, the other vowels would scarcely have been used unless they had been those received by the Jewish synagogue. From remote antiquity, as Nägelsbach acknowledges, the person here spoken of has been understood to be "the righteous germ," and this alone is in accordance with the grammar and the sense. Nevertheless, because Jeremiah in ch. xxxiii. 15, 16 applies the name also to Jerusalem, he, with Ewald and Graf, understand it of Israel. But each passage in an author is to be interpreted in its proper grammatical sense, and not distorted to make it conform to something which he says elsewhere. See note on ch. xxxiii. 16.

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS] *Jehovah Zidkenu.* Though the Hebr. language admitted into ordinary appellations the name of the Deity, yet this is the case solely in compound and never in uncompounded names. Such are either memorials of some great event, *e.g.* Gen. xvi. 14, xxii. 14; Exod. xvii. 15; Judg. vi. 24, &c.; or virtual promises of some future deliverance, Jer. xxxiii. 16; Ezek. xlviii. 35; or names of the Deity, Isai. vii. 14, ix. 6. As regards the meaning of the name, the received view has been that the Messiah is here called (1) Jehovah, and is therefore very God; and (2) our righteousness, because He justifies us by His merits. But Hengstenberg, followed by Keil, shews that *Jehovah Zidkenu* rather means *He by whom Jehovah works righteousness:* and similarly in ch. xxxiii. 16 Jerusalem bears the same name because righteousness will be wrought in and through her, *i.e.* in and through the Church. According to this interpretation, righteousness no longer means justification, but personal holiness, which is the work of the Spirit after justification. This view equally contains the doctrine of the Godhead of the Messiah, but not so directly. For it implies the existence of a vicegerent of God upon earth, by whom God will impart that perfect righteousness, to which no man can attain by himself.

7, 8. These verses, with slight alterations, have already occurred in ch. xvi. 14, 15. In both places the context requires them, and Jeremiah's habit of repeating himself has already been noticed. Their omission therefore here by the LXX. is of little importance, especially as they are found in that version at the end of the chapter, where certainly they are out of place. Here they shew that the advent of the Messiah will involve a greater manifestation of the power of God, than the Exodus from Egypt.

9. *because of the prophets*] Rather, **Concerning** *the prophets.* These words should come first, as being the title of this portion of the prophecy, containing *vv.* 9—40. Up to this verse, Jeremiah had been setting forth, for Zedekiah's warning, the example of the three evil shepherds who had preceded him, yet ending with the hope-inspiring prospect of the Messiah. He now turns to the spiritual rulers, and prefixes to his address a superscription in the usual form, cp. ch. xlvi. 2, xlviii. 1, xlix. 1, 7, 23, 28.

Mine heart...] In the first half of the verse the prophet expresses his emotion. *My heart*, he says, *is broken within me; all my bones shake*, the verb used here being a more intense form of that rendered *moved* in Gen. i. 2, and *fluttereth* in Deut. xxxii. 11. It occurs nowhere else, but the metaphor is a simple one. In the Hebr. this portion is of studied regularity of form, consisting of four clauses, each containing three words: and upon this, but separated by the chief Hebr. mark of division, follows the reason, *because of Jehovah, and because of the words of His holiness.*

terers; for because of ‖ swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their ‖ course is evil, and their force *is* not right.

‖ Or, *cursing.*

‖ Or, *violence.*

11 For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

12 Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery *ways* in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

‖ Or, *an absurd thing.* † Heb. *unsavoury.*

13 And I have seen ‖ † folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err.

14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem ‖ an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as *f* Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

‖ Or, *filthiness.*

f Isai. 1. 9.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with *g* wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is ‖ profaneness gone forth into all the land.

g chap. 8. 14. & 9. 15.

‖ Or, *hypocrisy.*

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10. *the land is full of adulterers*] As the prophets of Jehovah are addressed, this must be taken literally of the general prevalence of immorality, and not of idolatry.

because of swearing] Rather, *because of* **the curse**. The land mourns, because it is suffering from the curse denounced against sin, cp. ch. xi. 3. The mourning probably refers to the drought, on which see ch. xii. 4, xiv. 2.

the pleasant places of the wilderness] Really, its **pastures**. Cp. ch. vi. 2, ix. 10.

their course] *i.e. their running*, their mode of life. See ch. viii. 6. The marginal rendering, *violence*, is a mistake. See on ch. xxii. 17.

their force is *not right*] The original is much more expressive. *Their heroism*, that on which they pride themselves as mighty men, *is not right*, is wrong, see note on ch. viii. 6.

11. *For both prophet and priest are profane*] While by their office they are consecrated to God, they have made themselves common and unholy by their sins. See note on ch. iii. 9.

yea, in my house] This may refer to sins such as those of which the sons of Eli were guilty, 1 S. ii. 22; but Keil thinks that they had defiled the temple by idolatrous rites. Cp. ch. xxxii. 34.

12. *they shall be driven on*] Lit. *they shall be pushed* or *thrust down*. Every word denotes the certainty of their fall. *Their path is like slippery places in darkness:* and on this path *they are pushed with violence*, for such is the meaning of the verb. External circumstances assist in urging on to ruin those who choose the dangerous path of vice.

I will bring evil upon them] Their ruin is the result of the sure working of God's law.

13. *And I have seen folly...*] Rather, **Also** *I have seen*. The prophet contrasts the prophets of Samaria with those of Jerusalem. The former were open idolaters, and in their conduct God saw folly, lit. that which is insipid, as being unsalted, cp. Job i. 22, xxiv. 12. The marg., *unsavoury*, means *having a bad flavour:* the Hebr. rather is, *flavourless*. It was stupidity to prophesy by Baal, an idol, and therefore an absolute nonentity (1 Cor. viii. 4).

in Baal] *i.e.* in the name of Baal. See ch. ii. 8.

14. *I have seen also*] Rather, **But** *in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing*. The two next words are infinitives, and might more exactly be translated, *the committing adultery and the walking in lies*. While professing a true faith they led immoral lives, and lived in hypocrisy, and thus their conduct is more strongly condemned than that of the Baal-priests.

they strengthen...] First by neglect; for as God's ministers it was their duty to warn and rebuke sinners: secondly by the direct influence of their bad example.

they are all of them] *They* **have become**, *all of them, i.e.* the people of Jerusalem, and not the prophets only. So *the inhabitants thereof*, lit. *her inhabitants*, means the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15. *I will feed them*] See ch. ix. 15.

water of gall] See ch. viii. 14.

profaneness] Not as in the marg. *hypocrisy*, but desecration. The wickedness occasioned by the immorality of the prophets has defiled the land, so that it is no longer consecrated, see *v.* 11.

16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, *and* not out of the mouth of the LORD.

17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, [k] Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the [l] imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

18 For who hath stood in the [l] counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard *it?*

19 Behold, a [i] whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked.

20 The [k] anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.

21 [l] I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

22 But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should

[k] chap. 6. 14. & 8. 11. Ezek. 13. 10. Zech. 10. 2.
[l] Or, *stubbornness.*
[l] Or, *secret.*
[i] chap. 30. 23.
[k] chap. 30. 24.
[l] chap. 14. 14. & 27. 15.

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16. *Hearken not*] As the false prophets, equally with the true, spake in Jehovah's name, how were the people to know them apart? This difficulty Jeremiah now answers by shewing that the false prophet always brings a message that quiets the conscience and gives it a delusive peace.

they make you vain] *i.e.* they deceive you, fill you with vain hopes.

a vision of their own heart] As the heart was regarded by the Jews as the seat of the intellect, this means, not a vision after their own wishes, but one of their own invention.

17. *They say still*] Or, *They say* **continually.** Lit. *they say a saying, i.e.* they say it perpetually.

The LORD hath said] See Note at end of Chapter.

after the imagination] **In the stubbornness.** See ch. iii. 17.

This verse gives the chief note by which the false prophet is to be detected, namely, that his predictions violate the laws of morality.

18. *For who hath stood...*] The prophet has just given the people a test by which they may distinguish the false prophet from the true. He now applies this to the circumstances of the times. A whirlwind is already gone forth. Had these false prophets stood in God's secret counsel, they like Jeremiah would have laboured to avert the danger by turning men from their evil way.

the counsel] The Hebr. word (*sôd*) is a confidential meeting of private friends, see notes on ch. vi. 11, and Ps. xxv. 14, where as here it means the nearness of the saints to God. Jeremiah demands that they shall produce from among the false prophets any one who stands in this confidential relation to Jehovah.

his word] The A.V. accepts as usual the correction of the Masorites, but the written text (C'tib) has *my word.* This change of person is too common to necessitate any alteration, and, moreover, the prophet's word was also God's word.

19. *Behold, a whirlwind...in fury*] Rather, *Behold,* **the tempest of Jehovah, even** *hot anger hath gone forth,* **and a whirlwind** *shall burst upon the head of the wicked.* The first noun does not mean a whirlwind, but simply a *tempest,* as in Isai. xxix. 6. So in Ps. cvii. 25 the A.V. has *a stormy wind,* the Hebr. being *a wind of tempest.* Next the A.V. takes *fury* as an epithet of the tempest: really, it is an explanation of it.

grievous] must be omitted, the Hebr. being *a whirling tempest* = a whirlwind.

shall fall grievously] Lit. *shall whirl, i.e.* the full fury of the storm shall burst upon the wicked.

20. *The anger of the LORD*] This again is an explanation of the tempest.

in the latter days] This phrase means the proper and final development of any event or series of events. Thus it is constantly used of the Christian dispensation as the full development of the Jewish Church. But here it means the destruction of Jerusalem, as the legitimate result of the sins of the Jews.

ye shall consider it] Rather, *ye shall* **understand** *it perfectly.* When Jerusalem is destroyed the exiles taught by adversity will understand that it was sin which brought ruin upon their country, and thereupon will repent and return from Babylon a regenerate people. This and the preceding verse occur again with slight variations in ch. xxx. 23, 24.

21. *yet they ran*] *i.e.* hurried with indecent eagerness to take upon them the responsibilities of the prophetic office.

22. *they should have turned them...*] In *vv.* 16, 17 we had the test by which to dis-

have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

23 *Am* I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?

24 Can any [m] hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

25 I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

26 How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart;

27 Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, [n] as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

28 The prophet [†] that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

29 *Is* not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer *that* breaketh the rock in pieces?

30 Therefore, behold, [o] I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that

[m] Psal. 139. 7, &c. Amos 9. 2, 3.

[n] Judg. 3. 7. & 8. 33.

[†] Heb. *with whom* is.

[o] Deut. 18. 20. chap. 14. 14, 15.

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tinguish the true teacher from the false; here we have the work of the true prophet, which is to turn men from evil unto good.

23. Am *I a God at hand...?*] Or, **near.** The phrase *at hand* now signifies *ready, within call.* But this is an appeal to the omnipresence of God in demonstration of the wickedness of the prophets. His power is not limited, so as for Him to notice only things close to Him, but is universal. That this is the right sense is proved by what is said in the next verse, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?"

25. *I have dreamed*] Even as early as Deut. xiii. 1 *a dreamer of dreams* is used in a bad sense, and with reason. For though there are several examples in Scripture of God communicating His will by dreams, it was yet a thing too easy to counterfeit for it not to be misused. And as all superstitious people attach importance to dreams, the false prophets were sure of the credulous multitude being ready to give open-mouthed audience to them every time they said *I have dreamed.*

26. *How long shall* this *be in the heart...?*] *i.e.* how long shall this prophesying of lies be the purpose of the false prophets? In the Hebrew, however, the first interrogative, How long? is followed by another interrogative particle, for which reason most modern commentators follow L. de Dieu in translating, *How long? Is it in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies, and prophesy the deceit of their heart—do they purpose to make my people forget my name by their dreams which they tell one to another?* The first interrogative marks the prophet's impatience, *How long* is this state of things to last? He then puts the real question, but for emphasis' sake breaks off at the end of the verse, and resumes and completes it in *v.* 27. Both ways offer difficulties, but either is better than Nägelsb.'s conjecture, *How long still is the fire in the heart,* &c.? The ancient versions all agree with the A.V. in neglecting the second interrogative.

27. *every man to his neighbour*] *i.e.* **to one another**, but not in the sense of one false prophet telling his dreams to another, but of telling them to the people about him, to any one.

as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal] Rather, *as their fathers* **forgot** *my name* **through** *Baal.* The superstition which attaches importance to dreams keeps God as entirely out of men's minds as absolute idolatry.

28. *let him tell a dream*] Rather, *let him tell it* **as** *a dream.* The word is used adverbially in opposition to *truth*, translated adverbially at the end of the next clause, *faithfully*, better, **as truth.** The dream is but a dream, and is to be told as such, but God's word is to be spoken (*faithfully* of course, but that is not the prophet's meaning: it is to be spoken) **as** certain and absolute **truth.**

What is *the chaff to the wheat?*] The dreams are the chaff, worthless, with nothing in them; the corn is God's word. What have these two in common? The word rendered *wheat* means the pure grain after it is cleansed and winnowed. Thus there is in it no evil admixture; it is (1) man's food, and can maintain life, and (2) it possesses life in itself, and can take root and grow. Such too is God's word to the soul, but the chaff has no such qualities.

29. Is *not my word like as a fire?*] These words mark another quality in God's word. It is the great purifier which destroys all that is false and leaves only the genuine metal. Cp. Heb. iv. 12.

like a hammer...] Man's word lulls and weakens the conscience: God's word rouses and strengthens it, and crushes within the heart everything that is evil.

30. *I* am *against the prophets*] Jeremiah

steal my words every one from his neighbour.

31 Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

32 Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

33 ¶ And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What *is* the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

34 And *as for* the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house.

35 Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD an-

10 Or, *that smooth their tongues.*

† Heb. *visit upon.*

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now contrasts the words of the false prophets with that of Jehovah, giving in succession the main characteristics of their teaching. The first is that *they steal* God's *words* **from one another**. Having no message from God they catch up what is said by other people, and especially try to imitate the true prophets. In Nebuchadnezzar's invasion many, no doubt, tried to play the same part that Isaiah had so nobly filled in the invasion of Sennacherib.

31. *that use their tongues*] Lit. *that* **take** *their tongues.* This is their second characteristic. They have no message from God, but they *take their tongues*, their only implement, *and say, He saith.* The word thus translated is the solemn formula by which Jehovah affirms the truth of His words. Hypocrites and deceivers of all men most delight in these solemn asseverations. They seem to give reality to their emptiness.

32. *that prophesy false dreams*] On this, the third characteristic, see above, *v.* 25.

by their lightness] *By their vain talk.* The meaning of the root is *to bubble up* like a fountain. It may thus mean vain boasting, or, better, *empty talk.* See Gen. xlix. 4; Judg. ix. 4; Zeph. iii. 4.

therefore they shall not profit...] Or, **and** *they will not profit this people at all.*

33. *What is the burden of the* LORD*?*] The Hebr. word *massa* comes from a root signifying to *lift up*, and so its general meaning is **a** *burden* (see Introduction to Proverbs, p. 518). But the verb is also used of pronouncing anything aloud, see Num. xxiii. 7, &c.; Isai. iii. 7, xxxvii. 4, and thus in 1 Chro. xv. 22, 27 *massa* even means a *song*. In the present place it signifies a prophecy, either (1) as being something weighty: or (2) as something said aloud. Those who adopt the first explanation consider that a *massa* must always be of a minatory character; but probably this, confessedly its general use in Scripture, is an accident, arising from the fact that a prediction spoken publicly and with a raising of the voice would frequently be a denunciation. Still in Mal. i. 1 it seems to bear no such sense. Apparently its employment to signify a prophetic declaration is comparatively modern, not being found till 2 K. ix. 25, where Jehu applies it to the public condemnation of Ahab by Elijah. Isaiah, however, brought it into general use, as it occurs nine or ten times in the titles of his prophecies. Subsequently it was used in Prov. xxx. 1, xxxi. 1, and by Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah and Malachi, but never by Jeremiah, though his predictions were all of impending evil. Plainly, however, the false prophets applied it in derision to Jeremiah's prophecies, playing upon its double sense, and so turning solemn realities into mockery.

What burden?...] The Hebr. is so unusual that there can be little doubt that the LXX. and Vulg. with several MSS. are right in reading *Ye are the burden.* This involves no change of the consonants, but only another division of them (אתם המשא for את מה משא). The explanation attempted by Keil and Nägelsb., that it is a retort, and that therefore the very words of the previous question are repeated, does not at all account for the sign of the accusative את being prefixed to them.

I will even forsake you] Rather, *and I will* **cast you away**, ch. vii. 29, xii. 7. No sense can be made out of these words as long as the Masoretic reading *What burden?* is retained, as may be seen in the A. V. and the two commentators mentioned above. But with the slight emendation given above all is easy. *And thou shalt say unto them* **Ye are the burden:** *but I will* **cast you away**, *saith Jehovah.* From the idea of a burden the thought naturally arises of refusing to bear it, and throwing it off.

34. *I will even punish*] This proves that the word *burden* was used by the false prophets in mockery.

35. *What hath the* LORD *answered? and, What hath the* LORD *spoken?*] Henceforward both in their intercourse with one another, and

swered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

36 And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God.

37 Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

38 But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD;

39 Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, *and cast you* out of my presence:

40 And I will bring [f] an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

[f] chap 20. 11.

in addressing the prophets (*v.* 37), these are to be the proper words for prophecy. It is to be called an *answer* when the people have come to inquire of Jehovah: but His *word* when it is sent unasked.

36. *every man's word shall be his burden*] Rather, **every man's burden shall be his word**; *i.e.* his mocking use of the word burden shall weigh him down and crush him.

ye have perverted] *i.e.* have turned them round, and put them into a ridiculous light: a habit which is its own punishment, because it is fatal to all seriousness and earnestness.

38. *But since ye say*] Or, *But if ye say.*

39. *I will utterly forget you*] This verse should be translated, *Therefore, behold, I will even take you up* (or will burden you), *and I will* **cast** *you, and the city which I gave you and your fathers, out of my presence.* See Note at end of Chapter: and, on *I will cast you*, see on *v.* 33. Our translators have so felt the necessity of the right translation of this verb that they have inserted the words *and cast you* in the text on their own authority.

40. With this verse cp. ch. xx. 11.

NOTES on CHAP. XXIII. 17, 39.

17. As the phrase דִּבֶּר יְהוָה is nowhere else used in this abrupt way to introduce the word of God, Hitzig and Graf adopt the reading of the LXX. and the Syr. (wrongly translated in the London Polyglot), namely, לְמְנַאֲצֵי דְבַר יְהוָה *they say continually to those who despise the word of Jehovah.* But the Vulg. and Targ. support the rendering of the A.V.

39. The Masoretic reading is נָשֹׂא אֶשָּׂא, which is at variance with itself: for it should be נָשֹׁיתִי אֶשָּׂא. The LXX. Syr. and Vulg. all read נָשֹׂיתִי נָשָׂא, *i.e.* they formed the verb from the same root as the noun *massa.* Thrice in *v.* 38 the prophet uses the noun מַשָּׂא *a burden*, lit. *a taking up*, and then in *v.* 39 retorts it upon them, saying that God would certainly *take* them *up*, but only to cast them away. The elaborate repetition of *burden* in *v.* 38 is a preparation for nothing if we retain the Masoretic points.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Under the type of good and bad figs,* 4 *he foresheweth the restoration of them that were in captivity,* 8 *and the desolation of Zedekiah and the rest.*

THE LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs *were* set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar [a] king of

[a] 2 Kin. 24. 12. 2 Chr. 36. 10.

CHAP. XXIV. This prophecy is the final outcome of what has gone before, and never perhaps has a reigning king been addressed in such contemptuous terms. Nebuchadnezzar is to capture the city, and destroy the people: for evil rulers have by their influence corrupted them, and the prophets have sunk to so low a level that the word of Jehovah has become the object of their ridicule. God therefore will cast them utterly away, and bring upon them an everlasting shame (ch. xxiii. 39, 40). In this chapter Jeremiah further declares that Zedekiah and all the priests and prophets and people of Jerusalem are merely refuse, the decaying remains of a basket of fruit after it has been picked over. When Jeconiah was carried to Babylon, they doubtless congratulated themselves upon being saved from such a fate: really all that was good was then culled out, and placed in safety, and they were left behind because they were not worth the taking.

Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

2 One basket *had* very good figs, *even* like the figs *that are* first ripe: and the other basket *had* very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, † they were so bad.

† Heb. *for badness.*

3 Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

4 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

5 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge † them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good.

† Heb. *the captivity.*

6 For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull *them* down; and I will plant them, and not pluck *them* up.

7 And I will give them [b] an heart to know me, that I *am* the LORD: and they shall be [c] my people, and I will be their God: [d] for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

[b] Deut. 30. 6. chap. 32. 39. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26, 27.
[c] chap. 30. 22. & 31. 33. & 32. 38.
[d] chap. 29. 13.

8 ¶ And as the evil [d] figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt:

9 And I will deliver them † to [e] be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their* hurt, *to be* a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them.

† Heb. *for removing,* or, *vexation.*
[e] Deut. 28. 37. chap. 15. 4.

10 And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Jeremiah reproving the Jews' disobedience to the prophets,* 8 *foretelleth the seventy years'*

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1. *two baskets of figs* were *set before...*] The word *were* is to be omitted. *Set before, i.e.* put in the appointed place for offerings of firstfruits in the forecourt of the temple.

the carpenters and smiths] *The* craftsmen *and smiths*, see note on 2 K. xxiv. 14.

2. *like the figs* that are *first ripe*] The fig-tree bears three crops of figs, of which the first is regarded as a great delicacy. See note on Isai. xxviii. 4. The bad figs may have been those of the sycomore tree, which, unless they are punctured as they ripen, contain an acrid juice which renders them uneatable, Tristram, 'Nat. Hist. of Bible,' p. 399. Or, as the fig is easily bruised, they may have been fruit too decayed to be eaten.

5. *so will I acknowledge them...for* their *good*] The influence of men like Daniel must have greatly improved the general condition of the Jewish exiles, but the word points even more strongly to spiritual blessings.

7. *I will give them an heart to know me*] The complete fulfilment of this prophecy belongs to the Christian Church. As has been pointed out before, there is a close analogy between Jeremiah at the first destruction of Jerusalem, and our Lord at the second. So too there the good figs were those converts picked out by the preaching of Christ and the Apostles; the bad figs were the mass of the people, left for Titus and the Romans to destroy.

8. *that dwell in the land of Egypt*] Neither those carried captive with Jehoahaz into Egypt, nor those who flee thither, are to share in these blessings. The new life of the Jewish nation is to be the work only of the exiles in Babylon.

9, 10. Jeremiah in these verses refers back to the words of Deut. xxviii. 25, 37, which had a partial fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but their full and final accomplishment only when the house was left unto the Jews desolate by the Romans (Matt. xxiii. 38).

JEREMIAH'S FOURTEENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xxv.

The Wine-cup of fury.

The fourth year of Jehoiakim was the turning-point in the history of the East (see Introd. p. 315). Oriental empires before the time of

captivity, 12 and after that, the destruction of Babylon. 15 Under the type of a cup of wine he foreshoweth the destruction of all nations. 34 The howling of the shepherds.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;

2 The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

3 From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Ju-

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Darius had little cohesion, for their founders scarcely attempted more than to reduce the neighbouring states to the condition of tributaries. No sooner therefore was the strong hand of the conqueror withdrawn, than the conquered were ready to combine and throw off the yoke. In one way only did the early oriental monarchs attempt to counteract this tendency, and this was by building a vast central town, and peopling it with inhabitants chosen from the vanquished states, that so their empire might gain solidity by the resources which the capital put at its disposal. But even these capitals had little internal unity, and we have seen how rapidly Nineveh, when captured, absolutely passed out of existence.

But though Nineveh was the dominant power during the period of the Jewish kings, it was comparatively a modern town. "It was to Babylon that Assyria owed its culture, its system of writing, its religion, its sciences, its laws, and its customs. But while Babylonia could dispute with Egypt in point of antiquity, in that it existed as a powerful empire which had arrived at the highest degree of civilization more than two thousand years before our era, and extended its supremacy over Syria and even to the very valley of the Nile, Assyria as a state united under one government was comparatively recent" (Lenormant, 'Les prem. Civilisations,' II. 212). Even when growing into power it suffered many checks, and it was the defeat of Assurasamar by the Hittites, who dwelt in the north of Syria, which gave David free scope for the extension of his conquests to the banks of the Euphrates (ib. 210).

The interesting history of Merodach-baladan, preserved for us in the cuneiform inscriptions, and published by the same author under the title of 'A Babylonian Patriot,' ib. II. 203—309, shews us how restless Babylon had been for a long period under the Ninevite yoke, and how old was the struggle between Assyria and the Elamite and Median kings. At length, under a combined attack of Cyaxares the Mede and Nabopalassar the Babylonian, Nineveh fell.

The date usually given for this great event is B.C. 605, but the Babylonian cylinders place it twenty-two years later, in B.C. 583. Its full effect was not seen at once, and for some time it remained uncertain what would be the result of Nineveh's downfall. It was in the period just before its siege, and when Babylon and Nineveh were preparing for the death-struggle, that Pharaoh-Necho made his bold attempt to win for himself the supremacy of Western Asia. Why he did not push on more strenuously after he had defeated Josiah at Megiddo, we cannot tell, but after a delay of four years Egypt and Babylon met at Carchemish, and God gave the prize of empire to Nebuchadnezzar.

It was immediately after this battle, and probably before Nebuchadnezzar and his victorious army appeared in Palestine, that Jeremiah delivered this prophecy, orally perhaps at first to the people, but soon afterwards it was committed to writing, and formed part of Jehoiakim's roll (ch. xxxvi. 29). It foretells the greatness of the Babylonian empire, mentions the countries over which it was to extend, and the exact period of its duration. It belongs thus to the year of Jeremiah's greatest activity, when he was using his utmost efforts as a statesman to detach Jehoiakim from Egypt, and prevail upon him to accept frankly the position of a king subject to the general supremacy of Nebuchadnezzar. But he did not speak merely as a statesman, nor was it as a matter of policy, but of religious duty, that he pressed it upon Jehoiakim. And it was just this aspect of the appeal that made the king reject it. He burnt the prophet's roll, tried to slay the prophet, and heard the voice of God no more during the rest of his reign (see Introd. p. 322).

1. *the fourth year*] In Dan. i. 1 it is called the third year, but according to Hale's 'Sacred Chron.' II. 439 Jehoiakim was made king in July, 607, and Nebuchadnezzar early in 604. Thus this invasion of Judæa, in which Daniel was carried captive to Babylon, was according to the date of the years the fourth, but according to the actual time the third year of the Jewish king, being only the thirty-second month of his reign. The years in the Babylonian cylinders are of course B.C. 586 for Nebuchadnezzar's accession, and 598 for that of Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar was, however, not yet fully king, and it was during the course of this campaign that he heard of Nabopalassar's death, and hurried home to secure the throne.

dah, even unto this day, that *is* the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened.

4 And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, [a] rising early and sending *them*; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

[a] chap. 29. 19.

[b] 2 Kin. 17. 13. chap. 18. 11. & 35. 15. Jonah 3. 8.

5 They said, [b] Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever:

6 And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

7 Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

8 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,

9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

10 Moreover [†] I will take from them the [c] voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

[†] Heb. *I will cause to perish from them.*

[c] chap. 7. 34. & 16. 9. Ezek. 26. 13. Hos. 2. 11.

11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

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3. *the three and twentieth year*] *i.e.* nineteen under Josiah, and four under Jehoiakim. This prophecy, however, was delivered at the beginning of the year, and some months earlier than the writing of the roll (cp. ch. xxxvi.). It divides itself into three parts, namely, (1) the judgment of Judah, *vv.* 3—11, followed by Babylon's doom, *vv.* 12—14; (2) the wine-cup of fury, *vv.* 15—29; (3) the judgment of the world, *vv.* 30—38.

5. *They said*] Lit. *To say*, an inf. depending upon the verb in the first clause of *v.* 4, *Jehovah hath sent*, but the A. V. gives the right sense.

Turn ye] *i.e. Repent ye*, the great summons of God to mankind, whether given by the prophets of old, by John Baptist, or by the apostles and their successors, Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38, iii. 19.

9. *the families of the north*] Cp. i. 13, 14. By *families* are properly meant races sprung from the same ancestor, but the term is probably used here in a general way to signify the wide-spread empire of Nebuchadnezzar. As a matter of fact the basin of the Tigris and Euphrates was peopled by tribes of very various parentage; and Prof. Rawlinson notices that the early kings of Chaldæa are in the monuments often designated as "kings of the four races," 'Ancient Monarchies,' I. 61. And of the Babylonian subjects of Nebuchadnezzar he says that "they were emphatically a mixed race," ib. II. 497.

and Nebuchadrezzar] The Hebr. is, *and to Nebuchadrezzar*. The LXX. omit the words: many commentators substitute את for אל, which would give the sense of the A.V., and this seems to have been the reading of the Syr., Targ., and Vulg. There is no reason, however, for disturbing the present text, according to which *Nebuchadrezzar* must be governed by the verb *to send*. The sense thus is, *I will send to Nebuchadrezzar, my servant, and bring both him and the northern races.*

my servant] This title, so remarkable in the Old Testament as the especial epithet, first of Moses, and then of the Messiah, is thrice given to Nebuchadnezzar, and marks the greatness of the commission entrusted to him.

an astonishment] See chh. ii. 11, v. 30, and for *hissing*, ch. xviii. 16, xix. 8.

10. *the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle*] The threatenings of the first part of the verse indicate a state of general misery, but these last two denote the entire cessation of domestic life. The one was the sign of the preparation of the daily meal, the other of the assembling of the family after the labours of the day were over. Cp. Rev. xviii. 22, 23.

11. *seventy years*] The duration of the Babylonian empire was really a little short of this period. Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-

12 ¶ And it shall come to pass, [d] when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will [†] punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

14 For many nations and great kings shall [e] serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

15 ¶ For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the [f] wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

16 And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.

17 Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:

[d] 2 Chron. 36. 21, 22. Ezra 1. 1. chap. 29. 10. Dan. 9. 2.
[†] Heb. *visit upon.*
[e] chap. 27. 7.
[f] Job 21. 20. Psal. 75. 8. Isai. 51. 17.

four years, Evil-Merodach two, Neriglissar four, and Nabonedus seventeen, in all sixty-seven. If we add the two years of Nabopalassar's reign after the capture of Nineveh, we should thus have sixty-nine years, and probably some months. But the seventy years are more usually calculated down to the time when the Jews were permitted to return to their country, in accordance with the prophet's own statement in ch. xxix. 10. Cp. note on ch. xxvii. 7.

12. *perpetual desolations*] The empire of Babylon was practically the work of one man. After Nebuchadnezzar's death it continued for a few years, during which its history is a series of murders and usurpations, and then it fell for ever, and its ruins form its only lasting memorial. Contrast with this the promise to Judah in ch. iv. 27.

13. *in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations*] The LXX. have these words, but arrange them in a very different way. They place a full stop after *book*, and take the rest as the title of the series of prophecies against the nations, which there immediately follow, while in the Masoretic text they are deferred to the end, that with chh. l., li., they may form one entire series. They entirely omit, however, *v.* 14, and as this verse seems to refer in a very plain manner to chh. l. 9, 41, li. 27, 28, and as these chapters were certainly not written in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, but probably eleven years later, cp. ch. li. 59, there is a clear probability that in this place the LXX. have preserved the text as it stood in Jehoiakim's roll. But see Note at end of Chapter.

14. *many nations...shall serve themselves of them also*] *i.e.* shall impose forced labour upon the Chaldeans, and reduce them also to servitude. The "recompense of them according to their deeds" is repeatedly announced in the final prophecies, see ch. l. 29, li. 24. For this verse see Note at end of Chapter on *v.* 13.

15. *For thus saith*] Or, **hath said.** The LXX. place this prophecy after those against the nations, chh. xlvi.—xlix., among which they insert chh. l. li., written long afterwards. But either by itself, as in the Hebrew, or after the mind had been prepared for it by hearing what Jeremiah had previously predicted against several of these countries, as in the LXX., it forms an impressive statement of the manner in which the new kingdom of Babylon was to execute Jehovah's wrath upon the nations far and near.

the wine cup of this fury] Lit. *the cup of wine, even this fury.* For the metaphor see note on Ps. lx. 3.

16. *be moved*] Rather, *move themselves to and fro*, **stagger.**

be mad] The word is that used of David's temporary derangement in 1 S. xxi. 14, and means, *shall act like madmen.*

because of the sword] Jeremiah as usual drops his metaphor, and uses the language of fact.

17. *Then took I the cup*] We must not suppose with Michaelis that Jeremiah actually offered a wine-cup to the ambassadors of the nations assembled at Jerusalem. Holy Scripture has suffered too much from this materialistic way of explaining it. What he had to do was publicly to proclaim this prophecy in Jerusalem, as the central point of God's dealings with men, and leave it to find its way to the neighbouring states.

unto whom the LORD had sent me] This does not mean that Jeremiah was to labour in person among the Gentiles as he laboured in Jerusalem. He had no such commission as that given to Jonah. But the fate of the Gentiles was mixed up with that of the Jews, and the prophet was to warn the latter directly, but the former only so far as his words spoken at Jerusalem could be carried to them.

18 *To wit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as *it is* this day;

19 Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people;

20 And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod,

21 [g] Edom, and [h] Moab, and the children of [i] Ammon,

22 And all the kings of [k] Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the [l] isles which *are* beyond the [l] sea,

23 [m] Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all [t] *that are* in the utmost corners,

24 And all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the [n] mingled people that dwell in the desert,

25 And all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of [o] Elam, and all the kings of the Medes,

[g] chap. 49. 7, &c.
[h] chap. 48. 1.
[i] chap. 49. 1.
[k] chap. 47. 4.
[l] Or, *region by the sea side.*
[m] chap. 49. 8.
[t] Heb. *cut off into corners*, or, *having the corners of the hair polled:* chap. 9. 26.
[n] chap. 49. 31.
[o] chap. 49. 34.

18. *the kings thereof*] The plural is used for the reason given in ch. xix. 3.

as it is *this day*] Cp. ch. xi. 5. These words are not in the LXX., and were probably added by Jeremiah after the murder of Gedaliah had completed the ruin of the land.

19. *Pharaoh king of Egypt*] The arrangement is remarkable. Jeremiah begins with the extreme south, Egypt; next he takes Uz on the south-east, and Philistia on the south-west; next, Edom, Moab, and Ammon on the east, and Tyre, and Sidon, and the isles of the Mediterranean on the west; next, in the far east, various Arabian nations, whence he goes northward to Media and Elam, and finally ends with the kings of the north far and near.

20. *the mingled people*] In Heb. *ĕrĕb*, whereas the word for the mixed multitude among the Israelites is *ērĕb*, on which see note on Exod. xii. 38; and cp. Neh. xiii. 3. The word used here, and of which the meaning must be much the same, occurs again in ch. l. 37, and Ezek. xxx. 5; and as Psammetichus, the father of Pharaoh-Necho, crushed the petty kings of Egypt by the use of Carian and Ionian mercenaries, and as such always formed afterwards the core of the Egyptian armies, many commentators with Graf suppose that these are here meant, and so Gesenius translates *auxiliaries*. But it rather seems to signify a constituent portion of the people of Egypt, who were not of pure blood.

Uz] A district of Edom, cp. Lam. iv. 21, where Edom "dwells in the land of Uz," and see note on Job i. 1.

Azzah] *i.e.* Gaza, which is the spelling of the LXX. everywhere else adopted in the A. V.

the remnant of Ashdod] This is one of those pregnant sentences which none but a contemporary writer could have used. Psammetichus, after a siege of twenty-nine years, had captured and destroyed Ashdod, excepting a feeble remnant (Herod. II. 157). Notice also that Gath is omitted. It had apparently ceased to be one of the towns of the Philistine pentarchy. Cp. 1 S. v. 8, vi. 4.

22. *the isles*] The word is sing., and means, as rightly explained in the margin, any *coastland*, but as it is distinguished here from Tyre and Zidon, it probably refers to Cyprus.

23. *Dedan, and Tema*] See note on Isai. xxi. 13, and Lenormant, 'Manuel,' III. 239.

Buz] A district on the north of Arabia, bordering like the foregoing on Edom. See note on Job xxxii. 2.

all that are *in the utmost corners*] *i.e.* all who have the corners of their hair shorn. See note on ch. ix. 26. The tribe of Kedar is here meant.

24. *Arabia*] Not the whole of that vast region which bears the name in modern times, but the district bordering on Palestine, and inhabited mainly by Ishmaelites.

the mingled people] Cp. *v.* 20. In Arabia there seem to have been many tribes of Cushite origin, such as the Kenites, who by intermarriage with other tribes had become of mixed blood. See Knobel, 'die Völkertafel der Genesis,' p. 154, Lenormant, 'Manuel,' III. 235, 237. St Jerome, followed by some modern commentators, translates *the west*, and in *v.* 20, *the people generally*, but neither rendering is tenable.

25. *Zimri*] This country is never mentioned elsewhere. The Syr., by translating *Zamron*, connects it with *Zimran*, the eldest son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2). As Jeremiah takes the countries in order, it must have been a district between Arabia and Persia.

Elam] Strictly the district at the head of

26 And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which *are* upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

27 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink.

29 For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the [p] city [t] which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

[p] 1 Pet. 4. 17.
[t] Heb. *upon which my name is called.*

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall [q] roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth.

[q] Joel 3. 16. Amos 1. 2.

31 A noise shall come *even* to the ends of the earth; for the LORD

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the Persian Gulf, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, but put in Scripture for the whole of Persia. We find the kings of Elam in the cylinders constantly in alliance with Merodach-baladan and his descendants, and perpetually at war with Nineveh. Elam is coupled with Media in Isai. xxi. 2.

26. *the kings of the north*] Nebuchadnezzar's empire was to extend northward as far as the Caspian, but as these regions were shut out from the Jews by the deserts beyond Damascus, they are mentioned only generally.

all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth] In accordance with the usage of Holy Scripture this universality is limited. Cp. Dan. ii. 38, iv. 22. It is moral and not geographical. If Judah is included in the judgment which Nebuchadnezzar is commissioned to execute, how can any other kingdom escape?

the king of Sheshach shall drink after them] Of the numerous explanations given of this word, that alone of Jerome is probable, obtained by him doubtless from the Rabbi who instructed him in Hebrew. He says that it is the name Babel written in cypher (cp. Simonis 'Onomast.' 576 sq., Buxt. 'Lex. Talm.' sub אתבש). This, the oldest known cypher, consisted simply in reversing the order of the alphabet, whence its name *Athbash*, *T* the last letter being put for Aleph, *SH* the next in reverse order for Beth, and so on. By carrying this process back it will be found that Caph = *CH* takes the place of *L*, and then *SHeSHaCH* becomes *BaBeL*. A more remarkable example occurs in ch. li. 1, where the unmeaning words, *the heart of my risers up*, become when the letters are similarly transposed, *the Chaldæans*. For the genuineness of this clause see Note at end of Chapter.

27. *Drink ye*] The metaphors in this verse denote the utter helplessness to which the nations are reduced by drinking the wine-cup of fury.

30. *The LORD shall roar*] From this verse to the end of the chapter Jeremiah describes the judgment of the Gentiles in highly poetic language. Jehovah has risen like a lion from His covert, and at His roaring the whole world is filled with terror and confusion. Sheep and shepherds roll on the ground in consternation, but cannot escape; for like a storm-wind judgment stalks abroad, and the slain of the land cover the ground from one end of the earth unto the other, and lie unwept and without burial.

he shall mightily roar upon his habitation] **Against His pasture.** See note on ch. vi. 2. The exact meaning here is most important. In the previous clause it had been said that *God would give forth His voice from His holy habitation;* in this the prophet says that *He will roar mightily*, not upon His habitation, the place where He dwells, but *against His pasture*, the place where the sheep are, *i.e.* Judæa. As we shewed in the note on ch. vi. 2, the word means the circular encampment of shepherds in the wilderness, within which they drive the sheep at night for protection from wild beasts. Jehovah now comes forth as the lion to destroy the sheep which lie terrified within the circle of the tents.

a shout] Properly the *vintage-shout*, but used from its loudness for the war-cry. Cp. ch. li. 14; Isai. xvi. 9; and for treading the grapes, ib. lxiii. 3.

31. *A noise*] The confused noise of a great multitude of people, Isai. xiii. 4, xvii. 12; and so here the trampling of an army in motion, cp. Amos ii. 2.

hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them *that are* wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

33 And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth: they shall not be [r] lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

34 ¶ [s] Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye principal of the flock: for [†] the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like [†] a pleasant vessel.

35 And [†] the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be heard:* for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture.

37 And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

38 He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is [†] desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

[r] chap. 16. 4.

[s] chap. 4. 8. & 6. 26.

[†] Heb. *your days for slaughter.*

[†] Heb. *a vessel of desire.*

[†] Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escaping from, &c.*

[†] Heb. *a desolation.*

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a controversy] *i.e.* a suit at law, ch. ii. 9, xii. 1.

he will plead] Or, *will* **hold judgment**. It is as judge that He delivers the wicked to the sword. In metaphors of this kind there is nothing remarkable in God being compared to the prosecutor in one clause, and to the judge in the next.

32. *a great whirlwind*] Or, **storm**, ch. xxiii. 19.

the coasts of the earth] Translated *sides of the earth* in ch. vi. 22, where see note. The thunderstorm seen first on the edge of the horizon overspreads the heaven, and travels from nation to nation in its destructive course.

33. *they shall not be lamented*] See ch. viii. 2, xvi. 4.

34. *wallow yourselves* in the ashes] Rather, **roll yourselves on the ground**. The words *in the ashes* were probably added because found in the Hebr. in ch. vi. 26, but they are unsuitable here.

ye principal of the flock] Lit. *the strong ones of the flock*, the best and fattest of the sheep (Ewald), not *those rich in sheep* (Umbreit), and still less *the captains of the sheep* (Gesenius), *i.e.* "the rulers."

and of your dispersions] Rather, *and I will scatter you.* See Note at end of Chapter.

ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel] Though this is a sudden change of metaphor, yet there is no reason for adopting the reading of the LXX. *ye shall fall like chosen rams* (*i.e.* כִּכְרִי for כִּכְלִי). The versions all have the ordinary reading, and Jeremiah uses the comparison elsewhere (cp. ch. xxii. 28). It suggests the idea of being suddenly changed from a thing of value into worthless fragments.

36. *the LORD hath spoiled*] Or, **spoileth**, *is laying waste.* The insertion just before of the words *shall be heard* is very prosaic. Really, the previous clause is an exclamation: *A voice of the cry of the shepherds and a howling of the strong ones of the flock! for the devastation has begun.*

37. *the peaceable habitations*] *The* **pastures** *of peace*, the peaceable fields where the flocks lately dwelt in security. See on *v.* 30.

are cut down] Or, *are* **destroyed**, *desolated*, lit. *are put to silence.* See on ch. viii. 14.

38. *He hath forsaken his covert*] Jeremiah concludes by forcibly repeating but in a fuller form the thought with which he had begun this poem (see *v.* 30). Jehovah has risen up, like a lion that leaves its covert, eager for prey, that He may execute judgment upon the wicked.

the fierceness of the oppressor] See Note at end of Chapter.

NOTES on CHAP. XXV. 13, 26, 34, 38.

13. The text of the LXX. seems in this place to be more nearly what was written in Jehoiakim's roll, and is as follows:

9 "Behold, I send and will take a family from the north, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all the nations round about it, and I will make them desolate, and give them for a destruction and a whistling and a perpetual reproach. 10 And I will destroy from

them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the scent of ointment, and the light of the lamp. 11 And the whole land shall be for destruction, and they shall serve among the nations seventy years. 12 And when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will take vengeance on that nation, and make them a perpetual destruction. 13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have spoken against it, even all that are written in this book.

"What Jeremiah prophesied against the nations. Elam." (Upon this follows ch. xlix. 35—39, the superscription in *v.* 34 being omitted.)

Thus it omits in *v.* 9 the words *and to Nebuchadrezzar*, which, as we have shewn, are difficult grammatically. In *v.* 11 it omits the name of the king of Babylon, and says that the Jews shall serve among the nations seventy years. In *v.* 12 it again omits all mention of the king of Babylon, and of the land of the Chaldæans. In *v.* 13 it makes "the book" refer very unmistakeably to Jehoiakim's roll, and appends to it Jeremiah's prophecies "against the nations," putting as a title words which are quite out of place in the Hebr. text, as we cannot imagine Jeremiah himself to have said, *All that is prophesied in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations*. Finally, it also omits in *v.* 26 the mention of *the king of Sheshach*, *i.e.* of Babylon, which again is difficult: for why should the prophet put here in cypher what in *vv.* 9, 12, he had put openly? It seems probable, therefore, that the LXX. have preserved for us the earlier text, in which all direct mention of the king of Babylon is omitted, and the seventy years are given as the duration of Judah's captivity, and not of the Babylonian empire. Hitzig, Ewald, Graf, and others have doubted the genuineness of even this prophecy, but its presence in the text of the LXX. and the reference to it in ch. xxix. 10 leave its authenticity beyond doubt. But how is this fuller text of the Masorites to be explained? We answer, by the dislocation which Jehoiakim's roll evidently suffered. See Introd. 321, 322. Probably when Jeremiah wrote his prophecies against Babylon, contained in chaps. l., li., he may himself have separated "the prophecies against the nations" from the roll, and placed them along with his new predictions, in order to make the series complete. It is from these prophecies against Babylon that the inserted words were taken, and at first put into the margin, whence some scribe transferred them to the text. It can scarcely have been the work of Jeremiah himself, as there is not one of them which does not occasion grammatical difficulties. So also *v.* 14 appears to be a gloss to explain the words "What Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations," which had now become meaningless. The first half of it is taken from ch. xxvii. 7, the rest from ch. l. 29, li. 24.

26. Both here and in ch. li. 41 the LXX. omit the clause containing the name of the king of Sheshach. On this account, and because the prophecy properly belongs to the uprise, and not to the downfall, of the Babylonian empire, Ewald, Hitzig, and others regard these words as an interpolation. But the latter argument has little weight, as the limitation of the Babylonian empire to a duration of seventy years in *v.* 11 is an integral part of the prophecy, and is undoubtedly referred to in ch. xxix. 10. Moreover, they form an important element in the prophecy. If Judah was thus to be punished, and the Chaldæans invested with universal empire, was it because the Chaldæans were more approved by God in religion and morals than the Jews? No. They were simply God's scourge, made fit to be so by the vigour of one man, and at his death punishment will befall them also for their own sins, and in little more than twenty years after Nebuchadnezzar's death, their empire will cease for ever. They existed only to do the base office of an executioner, and that done, they will be laid aside. In this place moreover there is a reason for concealment, in ch. li. 41 none, and the name apparently is there used as one now well known as the equivalent of Babylon. How then did it arise? In this place we have the explanation. Not that it was used here for any cowardly reason. Jeremiah was the last man to shew fear. But this prophecy was one that was sure to become known to the Chaldæans, and would incline them to treat the exiles with compassion. The care taken by Nebuchadnezzar of Jeremiah proves the friendly feelings which he entertained towards him (ch. xxxix. 11), and he would also be well disposed towards those who had shared Jeremiah's sentiments. But for the purpose intended by taking the Jews to Babylon, it was of the utmost importance that they should meet with high consideration there, such as had been guaranteed them by the express promise in ch. xxiv. 6; and this was brought about in great measure by Jeremiah's influence. Still it is exceedingly probable that the form in which this prophecy appears in the LXX. was that in which it was first published in Jerusalem. It is there given as a distinct prediction separate from the first 14 verses, and without the conjunction *for* at the beginning of *v.* 15. For further comfort for the Jews Jeremiah may have completed it at a later time; for in its original state it had left them uncertain as to the manner in which their seventy years of servitude would be terminated. Now they learn that it will be by the fall of the Chaldæan empire (cp. Dan. ii. 39), and henceforward the name Sheshach would be one full

of meaning. For it would have become the pledge of deliverance.

34. The reading תֻּפּוּצוֹתֵיכֶם, *and of your dispersions*, is untenable. The previous word לִטְבּוֹחַ is an infin. mood, and could not be followed by a subst. to be translated as if it also were an infin. The Masorites therefore have written it as a verb וּתְפוּצוֹתֵיכֶם, but as this is not grammatical Hitzig corrects וּתְפִיצוֹתֵיכֶם, and this is now generally accepted. Hitzig translates, *and I will dash you in pieces: yea, ye shall fall as a precious vessel.* This gives an excellent sense, but there is no sufficient reason for departing from the usual meaning of the verb, *and I will scatter you.*

38. Many commentators, instead of *the fierceness of the oppressor*, read *the oppressing sword* (חרב for חרון), with the LXX. and Vulg., this being the reading in ch. xlvi. 16, l. 16. But it is difficult to see how so easy an expression could be changed into one so hard to explain. The Vulg. takes the word יונה in its ordinary sense of a *dove*, and many suppose this to have been blazoned upon the standards of the Babylonians (Diod. Sic. II. 4): but for this there is little authority. Though the LXX. translate it here *the great sword*, in the two other places they have *the Greek sword*, and so must have read חֶרֶב הַיְוָנָה *the sword of Javan*, an interesting rendering, as it shews that the Alexandrian Jews referred chaps. xlvi. and l. to the expedition of Alexander. The rendering of the A. V., *oppressor*, would require the reading יוֹנֶה, of which there are no traces: it is quite possible however that חרב may have been dropped out of the text, and that the prophet wrote *the fierceness of the oppressing sword.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Jeremiah by promises and threatenings exhorteth to repentance.* 8 *He is therefore apprehended,* 10 *and arraigned.* 12 *His apology.* 16 *He is quit in judgment, by the example of Micah,* 20 *and of Urijah,* 24 *and by the care of Ahikam.*

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; [a] diminish not a word:

[a] Acts 20. 27.

3 If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may [b] repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

[b] chap. 18. 8.

JEREMIAH'S FIFTEENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xxvi.

The prophet in danger of death.

We have in this chapter a narrative of the danger to which Jeremiah was exposed by reason of the prophecy contained in ch. vii. Naturally it could not be included in Jehoiakim's roll, because the one object of that roll was to awaken the king's attention to the doom which throughout a long period of years Jeremiah had consistently pronounced by the word of Jehovah against Jerusalem. All matters therefore irrelevant to the main issue would be excluded, and here we have also statements which would only serve to rouse the king's indignation.

For its present position many critics endeavour to find a reason. Ewald considers that together with the next three chapters it forms a historical supplement, setting forth the distinction between true and false prophecy. Hävernick thinks that its object is to support by proof the assertion in ch. xxv. 3—7, that the Jews had rejected the prophets. Keil regards ch. xxvi. as a sort of prelude to chh. xxvii.—xxix., of which the purpose is to vindicate the truth of the prediction, that the duration of the captivity would be seventy years. But all this is far-fetched and unsatisfactory, and it is better to regard the chapter as complete in itself, and read it in connection with ch. vii. It shews what dangers stood in the path of the true prophet, and what courage was necessary when the message ran so counter to all the feelings of the nation as that which threatened the temple with the same miserable fate which had already befallen the old tabernacle at Shiloh.

1. As some minute differences exist between this prophecy and that in ch. vii., some commentators have imagined that the prophet repeated his denunciation on several occasions. More probably it is the same prophecy, and was delivered but once. The indignation of the people at a fate being threatened them like that of Shiloh blazed forth immediately, and the violent course taken by Jehoiakim towards Urijah proved decisively that no repetition of the prophecy would be endured. In *vv.* 4—6 we have a summary of the prediction contained in ch. vii., and that again is but an outline of what was doubtless a long address. Slight divergences in such a summary are unimportant.

4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you,

5 To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending *them*, but ye have not hearkened;

6 Then will I make this house like [c] Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 ¶ When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down [‖] in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's *house*.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, [†] This man *is* worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

12 ¶ Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

13 Therefore now [d] amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will [e] repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

[c] 1 Sam. 4. 12. Psal. 78. 60. chap. 7. 12, 14.

[‖] Or, *at the door.*

[†] Heb. *The judgment of death is for this man.*

[d] chap. 7. 3.

[e] ver. 19.

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8. *had made an end of speaking*] These words denote an amount of respect either for the person of Jeremiah or for his office, which heightens the profanity of Jehoiakim in destroying the prophet's roll (ch. xxxvi. 23).

the people took him] *i.e.* apprehended him to put him formally upon his trial.

9. *Why hast thou prophesied*, &c.] The charge against Jeremiah was of prophesying falsely, for which the penalty was death, Deut. xviii. 20. They assumed that it was absolutely impossible that Jerusalem ever could become like Shiloh, and thus his condemnation was certain. For a similar assumption cp. Acts vi. 14.

were gathered against Jeremiah] Rather, unto *Jeremiah*. The people formed themselves into a regularly constituted *kahal* or congregation to take part in his trial.

10. *the princes of Judah*] It appears from this that though the priests could scourge a man, and put him in the stocks, they could not try him for his life, as the Sanhedrin could subsequently do, till the Romans deprived them of the power.

they came up from the king's house] Cp. ch. xxii. 1.

the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house], Or, *the entrance of the new gate of Jehovah*. This would be the gate built by Jotham (2 K. xv. 35), and was probably a usual place for trials.

11. *the prophets*] As these men claimed to be true prophets, and were probably regarded as such by the people, their presence added great weight to the charge. It does not follow that they claimed the high gift of direct inspiration, but the distinction between the prophet who belonged generally to the order, and those few to whom "the word of Jehovah came," was probably very undefined.

This man is *worthy to die*] Lit. *A sentence of death is to this man, i.e.* is due to him, is his desert.

as ye have heard] Only the people had heard the very words of Jeremiah, and the appeal to them is to confirm what the princes had heard in the form of evidence.

12—15. The answer of Jeremiah is simple and straightforward. Jehovah, he affirmed, had truly sent him, but the sole object of his prophesying had been to avert the evil by leading them to repentance. If they would amend their ways God would deliver them from the threatened doom. As for himself he was in their hands, but if they put him to death they would bring the guilt of shedding innocent blood upon themselves and upon the city.

14 As for me, behold, I *am* in your hand: do with me † as seemeth good and meet unto you.

† Heb. *as it is good and right in your eyes.*

15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

16 ¶ Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man *is* not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

17 Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying,

18 *f* Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *g* Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

f Micah 1. 1.

g Micah 3. 12.

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought † the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

† Heb. *the face of the LORD.*

20 And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah:

21 And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt;

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16. *This man*, &c.] Lit., as in *v.* 11, *There is not to this man a sentence of death, i.e.* he is acquitted by the princes with the assent of the congregation, to whose minds Jeremiah's speech had carried the conviction that he was speaking truthfully.

17. *the elders of the land*] See note on 1 K. xx. 7 for these elders in the kingdom of Israel; we here find similar elders in Judæa, the political institutions of the two kingdoms being very similar. They probably were the heads and spokesmen of the congregation, and after the princes who represented the king had given their decision, they added their approval.

the assembly] The *kahal, congregation*, see *v.* 9.

18, 19. For this prediction see Micah iii. 12, where it verbally agrees with the text in this place. We have here the explicit testimony of the elders that the prediction was originally spoken by Micah, and Dr Pusey well says, "It is now owned, well nigh on all hands, that the great prophecy in Micah iii. 12, iv. 1, 2, three verses of which Isaiah prefixed to his second chapter, was originally delivered by Micah" ('Minor Prophets,' p. 289). For the reasons for a different view, see Note C on Isai. ii. 2. Micah is called in the text *Michayah*, the full form of his name, meaning, *Who is like Jah?*

19. *besought the* LORD] Cp. Exod. xxxii. 11; 1 S. xiii. 12 (marg.).

Thus might we procure, &c.] Rather, **And we should commit** *a great evil against our* **own** *souls, i.e.* by putting Jeremiah to death we should commit a sin which would prove a great misfortune to ourselves.

20. *And there was also a man*] This narrative of Urijah's fate was no part of the speech of the elders, who would not be likely to contrast the behaviour of the reigning king so unfavourably with that of Hezekiah. Moreover, it would have been a precedent, not for acquitting Jeremiah, but for putting him to death. But independently of this the date does not suit. It is said that Jeremiah's trial took place "in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim," *v.* 1. Now even if the words are used in an inexact sense, still a considerable time would be required for the deliverance of Urijah's prophecy, his flight into Egypt, his pursuit, capture, return to Jerusalem, trial and execution. When too it is said that he prophesied "according to all the words of Jeremiah," it seems that it was the repetition of the prediction that made the king determine to close the mouths of the prophets at any cost. We may conclude then that Jeremiah, when he reduced the narrative to writing, added this history to shew the ferocity of Jehoiakim, and the danger to which he had been himself exposed.

21. *his mighty men*] The commanders of his army, while the *princes* are the civil officers.

22 And Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *certain* men with him into Egypt.

23 And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the † common people.

† Heb. *sons of the people.*

24 Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 Under the type of bonds and yokes he prophesieth the subduing of the neighbour kings unto Nebuchadnezzar. 8 He exhorteth them to yield, and not to believe the false prophets. 12 The like he doeth to Zedekiah. 19 He foretelleth, the remnant of the vessels shall be carried to Babylon, and there continue until the day of visitation.

22. *Elnathan*] Possibly the king's father-in-law, 2 K. xxiv. 8. His father *Achbor* was one of the princes sent by Josiah to Huldah, 2 K. xxii. 12. Hebrew names occasionally were taken from animals, thus Achbor is a *field-mouse*, and Shaphan a *coney*, and so, in old time, Rachel an *ewe*, Caleb a *dog*, &c.

23. *out of Egypt*] As Jehoiakim was a vassal of Egypt, he would easily obtain the surrender of a man accused of treason. Jeroboam, on the contrary, and others had found a safe refuge there in the days of Solomon, 1 K. xi. 17, 40.

the graves of the common people] See ch. xvii. 19 and 2 K. xxiii. 6.

24. *Nevertheless the hand*] Or, **But** *the hand, i.e.* Jeremiah would also have been put to death but for Ahikam.

Ahikam] See 2 K. xxii. 12, 14. His son Gemariah lent Jeremiah his room for the public reading of Jehoiakim's roll, and another son Gedaliah was made governor of the land by the Chaldæans, ch. xxxix. 14, whence we may conclude that the family shared the political views of Jeremiah. The affection felt for the prophet by the father was inherited by the son, and Jeremiah chose to share his fortunes after the capture of Jerusalem, ch. xl. 5, 6.

JEREMIAH'S SIXTEENTH PROPHECY.

Chaps. xxvii., xxviii., xxix.

The Babylonian Yoke.

In ch. xxv. Jeremiah had published his great prediction, that Judæa and the neighbouring nations must serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. In these three chapters we see with what energy, and yet with what thoughtfulness, he enforced the lessons of that prophecy. We find him pressing them upon the ambassadors of foreign powers, ch. xxvii. 1—11; upon king Zedekiah, *vv.* 12—15; and upon the priests and people, *vv.* 16—22. In ch. xxviii. we have a narrative of his spirited struggle with the false prophets, who sought to blind the nation to God's decrees; and in ch. xxix. we read how carefully he urged the exiles to make preparations for a lengthened stay at Babylon, and how actively he resisted the false prophets, who tried there also to mislead the people as they had done before at Jerusalem. In these transactions he stands before us as the representative of the divine element in the Jewish theocracy, speaking alike to king and people with all the conscious power of truth, and, as they accepted or rejected his words, effecting that separation among men, which is the final object of revelation, purifying the silver from the dross, and making the true believers fit to offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. As regards their date these three chapters belong to the first four years of Zedekiah.

The spelling in these chapters has occasioned much discussion. First of all the prophet's own name, which everywhere else is *Yirmyahu*, is here alone spelt *Yirmiyah*, though the longer and more usual form occurs four times in ch. xxviii. 12, xxix. 27, 29, 30. As the full form is found in 2 Chro. xxxv. 25, xxxvi. 21, 22, but the short form in Ezra i. 1, Movers, De Wette, Hitzig, and others, without questioning the general authenticity of these chapters, yet argue that they were revised and corrected in Ezra's time, if not by Ezra himself. Besides the prophet's own name those of Zedekiah, Jeconiah, Hananiah, and others in ch. xxix. 3, 25, 32, are abbreviated; but on the other hand we find Josiah's name written fully in ch. xxvii. 1; Zedekiah's, ibid. 3; another Zedekiah's in ch. xxix. 21, 22, and Shemaiah's, ibid. 24, though a few verses afterwards, *vv.* 31, 32, it is written *Shemayah* and not *Shemayahu*.

But though the prophet's own name occurs in the short form only here, yet if we take a wider view we find the spelling of names similarly compounded to be a matter of indifference. Both forms often occur in the same verse, *e.g.* ch. xxi. 1, xxxv. 3, xxxvii. 3, 13, xxxviii. 1, li. 59, and often in the same narrative the same name is spelt both ways, *e.g.* *Gedalyahu* coupled with *Nethanyah* in ch. xl. 14, xli. 1, 2, 6, but *Gedalyah* with *Nethanyahu* in ch. xl. 8. So Baruch is called indifferently *the son of Neriyah*, and *the son of Neriyahu*. In fact the matter is of no importance whatsoever. Fixity of spelling is a modern idea, the result of our use of printed books. We have

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck,

3 And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah;

4 And command them [1] to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters;

5 I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and [a] have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

6 And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, [b] my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

7 And all nations shall serve him,

[1] Or, *concerning their masters, saying.*

[a] Dan. 4. 17, 25, 32.

[b] chap. 25. 9. & 43. 10.

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tried to introduce it into ancient languages, as for instance into Latin, where the spelling of the printed text is seldom that of the MSS. Did we possess the text of the Bible before the Masorites settled it according to the tradition of the School of Tiberias, we should find numerous varieties of spelling; for even as it is those left are not inconsiderable. But while the Masorites did their best to reduce the spelling of the Bible to some rule, they did not interfere with the sacred name of Jehovah, and thus names compounded with it are spelt indifferently, sometimes with *Yah* only, at others with the fuller form, *Yahu*.

But besides this, Jeremiah writes the name of the king of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar eight times in these chapters, a form which only occurs twice elsewhere, in chh. xxxiv. 1, xxxix. 5. In the rest of the book it occurs twenty-six times, and is always written according to the Babylonian spelling, Nebuchadrezzar. This also is Ezekiel's way of writing, but everywhere else in the Bible the *n* has usurped the place of the *r*. Now there can be no doubt that the spelling with the *n* was that usual and current with the Jews, and it is remarkable that Jeremiah does not use the popular form till the name had become familiar with his countrymen. But why he adopted their way of speaking is not easy to say. Can we expect such matters to be always easy of explanation, when we remember that the book in which they are found was written two thousand four hundred years ago?

CHAP. XXVII. 1. *the reign of Jehoiakim*] Really, *of Zedekiah*, as the Syriac reads. In the LXX. the verse is wanting. But this is not the only error in these chapters: for in ch. xxviii. 1 we read "it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, in the fourth year." Now the same year could not be the beginning of the reign of two different kings, nor could the beginning of Zedekiah's reign be also its fourth year. There can be little doubt that some scribe has confused the title of this chapter with that of ch. xxvi., and that the words in ch. xxviii. 1, *in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah*, are a gloss put into the margin to explain "the same year," and have thence crept into the text.

2. *bonds and yokes*] Really, *a yoke*, of which the Hebrew gives the component parts. The word translated *yokes* means two curved pieces of wood, put the one over the neck of the ox, the other under, and then fastened together by *bonds* or cords, cp. Ps. ii. 3. It is evident from the words of ch. xxviii. 10 that Jeremiah actually appeared in public with a yoke upon his neck, nor were such symbolical acts so strange in old time as they would be deemed now.

3. *the messengers which come...*] Or, **are come**. The ambassadors of these five kings had probably come to Jerusalem to consult about forming a league to throw off the Babylonian supremacy. But for the present the attempt failed, partly perhaps through Jeremiah's opposition, and partly through the prompt action of Nebuchadnezzar, who in the course of this same year compelled his vassal Zedekiah to travel to Babylon to do homage to him, ch. li. 59. At a later date Zedekiah rebelled, but the siege of Jerusalem, which no doubt followed promptly upon this act, did not begin till his ninth year, 2 K. xxv. 1.

5, 6. God as Creator is Lord of all, and can give the work of His hands to whom He will. He gives therefore these kingdoms to Nebuchadnezzar, because he is His servant, see note on ch. xxv. 9. As such they too are bound to regard him as one invested with a special commission, whom they may not resist. The completeness of his dominion is indicated by God's bestowal upon him of the *beasts of the field*. The territories of these nations were to become mere hunting-grounds for him.

7. *all nations shall serve him, and his son,*

and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

9 Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your † dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

10 For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.

11 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

12 ¶ I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.

13 Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?

14 Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy ᶜ a lie unto you.

15 For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, yet they prophesy † a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

† Heb. *dreams.*

ᶜ chap. 14. 14. & 23. 21. & 29. 8.

† Heb. *in a lie*, or, *lyingly.*

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and his son's son] Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-four years, and was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach, who was murdered after a reign of two years. His murderer Neriglissar, the Nergal-Sharezer of ch. xxxix. 3, 13, himself a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, reigned four years, and his infant son Laborosoarchad was murdered after a reign of nine months. His successor was Nabonedus, in whose seventeenth year Babylon was captured by Cyrus. Now if Herodotus (I. 188) is right in saying that Nabonedus, whom he calls Labynetus, was a son of Nitocris, the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, the conspiracy in which Laborosoarchad perished was probably for the purpose of restoring the true line of Nebuchadnezzar to the throne, dispossessed by the usurpation of Nergal-Sharezer, and if so Belshazzar would be his grandson (see Dan. v. 2, marg.).

shall serve themselves of him] See ch. xxv. 14. After long servitude to the Persian and Median kings, the Seleucidæ ruined the remains of Babylon for the sake of their new capital Seleucia.

8. *the yoke*] The word used in this verse properly signifies the upper and main portion of the yoke, and so is constantly put for the whole.

9. *your dreamers*] Lit., *your* dreams (marg.). Though the insertion of *dreams* between *diviners* and *enchanters* is singular, yet there is a reason for it. People dream dreams for themselves, though they may go to diviners to ask the explanation of them. Besides being deceived by these numerous methods of conjuring, they also deceived themselves by fancying that they too had prognostics of national deliverance.

10. *to remove you far...*] The result, not the purpose, of their vaticinations. Their purpose was gain and popularity.

11. *But the nations...*] In the Hebr. the sentence is in the sing., *But the nation that will bring its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, that will I also cause to remain in its own land, saith Jehovah, and it shall till it and dwell therein.*

13—15. Unwarned by the fate of Jehoiakim Zedekiah was restless under the Babylonian yoke, and the false prophets, who doubtless appealed to the example of Isaiah encouraging Hezekiah to resist Sennacherib, found only too ready a hearing with him. He is addressed in the plural because his feelings were fully shared by the mass of the officers of state and by the people. A few like Ahikam, and Gedaliah, on the contrary, believed the words of Jeremiah. Let it be remembered

16 Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.

17 Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste?

18 But if they *be* prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

19 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city,

20 Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away [d] captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem;

[d] 2 Kin. 24. 14, 15.

21 Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain *in* the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem;

22 They shall be [e] carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I [f] visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

[e] 2 Kin. 25. 13. 2 Chron. 36. 18.
[f] 2 Chron. 36. 22. chap. 29. 10.

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that Jeremiah was the great statesman of these days, as Isaiah had been in the time of Hezekiah.

16—18. For these vessels, cp. 2 K. xxiv. 13. As was natural in a falling nation, both priests and people set great store by these relics of a bygone magnificence, and we find in the apocryphal book of Baruch, ch. i. 8, a statement that many of them were sent back to Zedekiah, a proof, if any were needed, how thoroughly these false prophets spake according to the wishes of the people, see ch. v. 31.

18. *that the vessels...go not...*] See Note at end of Chapter.

19—22. For these vessels, see 1 K. vii. 15, 23, 27, and for the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy, 2 K. xxv. 13. For the genuineness of these verses see Note at end of Chapter.

NOTES on CHAP. XXVII. 7, 18, 19—22.

7. This verse is omitted by the LXX. consistently with their usual practice, see Note on ch. xxv. 13. There is, however, no reason for doubting its genuineness, especially as the seventy years' duration of the exile is contained in the LXX. in ch. xxv. 11, xxix. 10. It is possible, however, that a shorter form of the prophecy relating to the Babylonian empire was published by Jeremiah at Jerusalem: for Zedekiah and his people were the bad figs cast aside as good for nothing, and had no claim upon the prophet for that full information which he gave to the exiles at Babylon. To them, as representing the sound part of the nation (see ch. xxiv. 5, 8), the secret was confided of Babylon's fall, and they were thereby assured of the certainty of their own restoration to Palestine. Thus the LXX., as representing the Jews of Palestine and Egypt, have in their copy only the threatenings: while the Hebr. text is the true and complete form as it was given to the Jews of Babylon.

18. In the phrase לְבַלְתִּי־בֹאוּ, both grammar and punctuation are anomalous. The right reading is probably לְבַלְתִּי יָבֹאוּ.

19—22. These four verses occur in a very brief form in the LXX. "For thus saith the Lord concerning the rest of the vessels, which the king of Babylon took not, when he removed Jeconiah from Jerusalem, they shall go to Babylon, saith the Lord." This form Movers and Hitzig regard as alone genuine, and the additions in the Hebr. as interpolations, but Graf has ably refuted their arguments, of which one only is interesting. Jeremiah calls the nobles here חֹרִים, and because Nehemiah uses this word six times, they jumped at the conclusion that it first came into use during the captivity. But Jeremiah uses it again in ch. xxxix. 6; Isaiah also uses it of the nobles of Idumæa, ch. xxxiv. 12, and in 1 K. xxi. 8, 11, it is applied to the nobles of Samaria. As a matter of fact it is a word in

very common use in Chaldee and Syriac, and does not like שָׂרִים, *princes*, refer to rank, but to birth. It is the Latin *ingenuus*, and in its own proper sense was just as much in use before, as after the captivity. Ezra never uses it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 Hananiah prophesieth falsely the return of the vessels, and of Jeconiah. 5 Jeremiah, wishing it to be true, sheweth that the event will declare who are true prophets. 10 Hananiah breaketh Jeremiah's yoke. 12 Jeremiah telleth of an iron yoke, 15 and foretelleth Hananiah's death.

AND it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, *and* in the fifth month, *that* Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which *was* of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

† Heb. *two years of days.*

3 Within † two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon:

4 And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the † captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

† Heb. *captivity.*

5 ¶ Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,

6 Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

7 Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;

8 The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.

CHAP. XXVIII. 1. *in the beginning... in the fourth year*, and *in the fifth month*] Upon this discrepancy, see note on ch. xxvii. 1.

Gibeon] As this was a city of priests, Josh. xxi. 17, it is probable that Hananiah was a priest as well as a prophet. He seems to have come to Jerusalem on purpose to confront Jeremiah, and to have chosen either a sabbath or a new moon for the occasion, that his act might be done not only *in the presence of the priests*, but also *of all the people*.

2. *I have broken*] The prophetic perfect expressing certainty. Notice also that Hananiah prefixes the solemn formula which claims direct inspiration.

3. *Within two full years*] Lit. *In yet two years days*, not *of days*, as the margin of the A.V., the words being in apposition, *years even days*. The effect is not to produce definiteness (Keil), but exactly the contrary, see Gen. xli. 1; 2 S. xiii. 23, xiv. 28. Hananiah probably was induced to fix this date by the expectation that the confederacy then on foot would defeat Nebuchadnezzar. But it is the tendency of all false prophecy, and all false exposition of prophecy, to see everything in connection with the immediate present. As events recede into the past, their importance, by the laws of moral perspective, diminishes proportionably.

4. *Jeconiah*] This mention of Jeconiah's name suggests that Zedekiah was not popular, and that the people would have preferred the young king, who had not reigned long enough to make enemies. Probably also Zedekiah had now started for Babylon, ch. li. 59, so that there was no danger in expressing a longing for his nephew in place of himself.

6—9. The answer of Jeremiah is meek and patient. He declares that his own wishes concurred with Hananiah's prediction, but asserts that that prediction was at variance with the language of the older prophets.

8. *evil*] The reading of many MSS. *famine*, for *evil*, has probably arisen from Jeremiah's fondness for coupling together the

9 The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

10 ¶ Then Hananiah the prophet took the [a] yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it.

[a] chap. 27. 2.

11 And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

12 ¶ Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah *the prophet*, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

13 Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

15 ¶ Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught [b] †rebellion against the LORD.

[b] Deut. 13. 5. chap. 29. 32.

† Heb. *revolt.*

17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 Jeremiah sendeth a letter to the captives in Babylon, to be quiet there, 8 and not to believe the dreams of their prophets, 10 and that they shall return with grace after seventy years.

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mention of the sword, famine and pestilence. But instead of *the sword* he says in this place *war*, so that he is not now employing his usual formula.

9. *when the word of the prophet shall come to pass*] This is the rule given in Deut. xviii. 22, but that it is not an unfailing criterion, see ibid. xiii. 2, 3.

10. *the yoke*] The sing. of the word used in ch. xxvii. 2, but put for the whole yoke. Encouraged by Jeremiah's patience, and with no answer to give to his argument, Hananiah resorts to violence, tears the yoke from the prophet's neck, and breaks it, probably to the great delight of the multitude, who saw in this spirited act a symbol of deliverance.

11. *And the prophet Jeremiah went his way*] It is remarkable that Jeremiah did not meet Hananiah's asseveration that he spake the word of Jehovah of hosts by any similar assertion of his own prophetic dignity. He addressed an argument to the reason of the people in answer to Hananiah's words, but to his violence he made no answer whatsoever.

12. *Then the word of the LORD came*] The true prophet had to wait till God spake to him: of himself the utmost he could do was to reason.

13. *thou shalt make for them yokes of iron*] Rather, *thou* **wilt**... The yoke of Babylon must be borne: but it depended upon the conduct of the different nations, whether it was a light yoke of wood, or a heavy yoke of iron. Men like Hananiah, by encouraging the Jews to rebel, would only make their lot the harder. Had Zedekiah obeyed Jeremiah, he might have lived an honoured vassal of the Chaldees: as it was, after enduring the horrors of a siege, he saw his children slain before his eyes, his nobles put to death, his city burnt, his subjects carried into captivity, and finally his eyes were put out, and he was dragged in chains, to die at Babylon.

15. *the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet*] Both alike are styled prophets, the true and the false. Men are not marked off from one another by a difference of titles, but by a difference of deeds, and one of the hardest tasks of life is to distinguish the true from its counterfeit.

16. *I will cast thee*] Rather, **I send thee away**. There is a reference to the previous verse, where the same verb occurs. God had not sent Hananiah to prophesy, but He does now send him away to die.

rebellion] As Nebuchadnezzar was Jehovah's servant, *i.e.* His vizier, to teach rebellion against him was to teach *rebellion* against his master.

CHAP. XXIX. Appended to this history of the struggle with the false prophets at home

15 He foretelleth the destruction of the rest for their disobedience. 20 He sheweth the fearful end of Ahab and Zedekiah, two lying prophets. 24 Shemaiah writeth a letter against Jeremiah. 30 Jeremiah readeth his doom.

NOW these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon;

[a] 2 Kin. 24. 12, &c.

2 (After that [a] Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the [b] eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;)

[b] Or, *chamberlains.*

3 By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) saying,

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;

5 Build ye houses, and dwell *in them;* and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;

6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

7 And seek the peace of the city

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is a letter addressed to the exiles at Babylon, and sent to them by the hands of ambassadors from Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah's was evidently an uneasy throne, the people restless, the priests and princes eager to revolt, and the Chaldees probably irritated, as the Romans were subsequently, at the determination of the Jews never to submit quietly to a foreign rule. And there was the same ferment at Babylon as at Jerusalem. This Jeremiah sought to quell by assuring them that the exile would last seventy years, and by urging them to make their preparations accordingly. His words there found credence, for the exiles were the elect of the nation (ch. xxiv. 5—7), but not without the same kind of resistance on the part of the false prophets as that which they carried on too successfully at home.

1. *the residue of the elders*] *i.e.* such of the elders as were still alive. Hitz. argues that as few of them could have died in so short a time, it must mean such as were neither priests nor prophets. But if so the order would have been, *the priests, the prophets, and the residue of the elders.* Really we cannot tell whether several might not have died from the hardships of the journey to Babylon, or been put to death by Nebuchadnezzar, nor must we translate the Bible according to our notions of what it ought to say.

2. *the queen*] **The queen-mother,** cp. ch. xiii. 18.

the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem] As the eunuchs were not princes of Judah, though they might hold high office at the king's court, either the conjunction *and* has dropped out before *the princes*, or the clause is a gloss which has crept into the text from the margin, where it may have been placed by some one as a correction of the word *eunuchs* to make this place agree with ch. xxiv. 1. Keil's assertion that the word does not necessarily mean eunuchs is not to be received. Even if it did mean, as he supposes, "the officials of the court," they could not be properly described as *princes of Judah and Jerusalem.*

3. *Elasah*] He was probably brother of Ahikam (ch. xxvi. 24), and would therefore be an acceptable person at the Chaldæan court.

whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent] As Zedekiah had to go in person to Babylon in his fourth year (ch. li. 59), this embassy was probably sent two or three years earlier. Its date, however, was subsequent to the vision in ch. xxiv., as Jeremiah in his letter repeatedly refers to it (cp. xxix. 10 with xxiv. 6, xxix. 17 with xxiv. 2, 8, and xxix. 18 with xxiv. 9). It is appended therefore to ch. xxviii., not as later in point of time, for it is earlier, but because of the similarity of subject.

4—7. Jeremiah begins his letter by shewing the exiles that it was God who had caused them to be carried captive to Babylon. As it was His doing, therefore, for their good, instead of keeping their money in a portable form to be ready to take back with them to Judæa, they were to invest it in houses and land, and make every preparation for a lengthened stay. By thus entering heartily into business, and setting themselves with energy to make the best of their position, they would soon, in a growing town like Babylon, acquire wealth and influence; whereas if they were always restlessly looking out for the opportunity of returning home, they would rapidly fall into poverty and dwindle away.

7. *seek the peace of the city...*] Chiefly of

whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

8 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, [b] deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

9 For they prophesy [†] falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

10 ¶ For thus saith the LORD, That after [c] seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an [†] expected end.

12 Then shall ye [d] call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

[b] chap. 14. 14. & 23. 21. & 27. 15.

[†] Heb. *in a lie.*

[c] 2 Chron. 36. 21, 22. Ezra 1. 1. chap. 25. 12. & 27. 22. Dan. 9. 2.

[†] Heb. *end and expectation.*

[d] Dan. 9. 3, &c.

Babylon, but also of any city wherein any of them were placed. And this they were to do, not only because their welfare for seventy years was bound up with that of Babylon, but because it would have degraded their whole moral nature to have lived as conspirators, banded together against the country that was for the time their home, and cherishing feelings of hatred towards those with whom they were every day brought into contact.

8. *your prophets and your diviners*] The evils from which the people had suffered so cruelly at home followed them in their exile necessarily, as St Jerome shews, ch. i. 14; for what made the false prophet and diviner thrive was the longing of the people after false hopes.

dreams which ye cause to be dreamed] Rather, *dreams which ye let yourselves dream.* Their restless state of mind caused them both to have dreams and to attach importance to them. The verb, however, never occurs elsewhere, and the rendering of the A.V. gives a fair sense. As long as there was a market for dreams, so long there would be plenty of impostors to supply them.

10. *seventy years*] See note on ch. xxv. 11.

at Babylon] Or, for *Babylon.* The words literally signify, *according to the measure of the fulfilment of seventy years for Babylon.* The seventy years are primarily the length of the Babylonian empire, and only in a secondary sense that of the Jewish exile.

my good word] The promise in ch. xxiv. 6, 7.

11. *an expected end*] Rather, *a future and a hope.* The first word means *something after*, and is thus a promise that the nation shall not come to an end, but that the exile shall be followed by a restoration. This *future* is the era of the second temple; and this was also their *hope*, namely, to be once again a nation.

12. *ye shall go and pray unto me*] Michaelis thinks that this is a Hebrew idiom for repeated and habitual prayer, but most recent commentators understand it of going to the place of prayer.

12—14. With these verses cp. Deut. iv. 29, 30, xxx. 1—5.

15. This verse has been repeatedly attacked as having apparently no connection either with what precedes or with what follows. Several therefore of the older school of commentators (Houb., Capp., Ven., &c.) have imagined that Jeremiah wrote two letters to the exiles at Babylon, and that the substance of the second letter begins at *v.* 20, whither they propose to remove the present verse as a not unfitting introduction to what follows. More recent critics (*e.g.* Hitzig) boldly affirm that *vv.* 16—19 are an interpolation, appealing in proof to the fact that they are not in the LXX. But the text of the LXX. is here throughout so brief and confused as to be explicable only on the supposition repeatedly stated in these pages, that it represents what was left behind in Egypt when Jeremiah died, copied probably with extreme haste, and with no opportunity of careful collation afterwards. On the other hand the Hebrew text represents no hurried transcript, but the original manuscript, and is especially trustworthy in the case of these letters sent to Babylon (see also ch. li.), because the originals of them would be preserved there with religious care, and would be available for collation with the text preserved by Jeremiah himself.

15 ¶ Because ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon;

16 *Know* that thus saith the LORD of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, *and* of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity;

17 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the [e] sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like [f] vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

18 And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, [†] to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them:

19 Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which [g] I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them;* but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

20 ¶ Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon:

21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes;

22 And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which *are* in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

[e] chap. 24. 10.
[f] chap. 24. 8.
[†] Heb. *for a curse.*
[g] chap. 25. 4. & 32. 33.

As for the supposed want of connection, Ewald shews that it is apparent rather than real. The object of the letter was to persuade the exiles to settle quietly at Babylon. The great obstacle in the way of this was the activity of the false prophets; and their great appeal was to the existence of a king of David's line upon the throne at Jerusalem. The order of the thoughts, therefore, is as follows: You say you have prophets at Babylon, *v.* 15; but I tell you that all the hopes they utter about Jerusalem throwing off the Chaldæan yoke are untrue. Zedekiah and his people will come to a miserable end, *vv.* 16,—18, in punishment of their disobedience, *v.* 19; and as for the two false prophets who chiefly trouble you, Nebuchadnezzar will put them to death for stirring you up to revolt, *vv.* 20—23. What probably so excited them was the knowledge that the representatives of various kings were assembled at that very time at Jerusalem to form a coalition against Babylon (see on ch. xxvii. 3).

15, 16. *Because ye have said*...Know *that thus saith*] Lit. *For ye have said Jehovah hath raised up for us prophets as far as to Babel: for thus saith Jehovah of the king*.....Inasmuch, however, as *for* often expresses an opposition with what has gone before, the A. V. gives the right sense.

17. *vile figs*] The adj. does not occur elsewhere, but it comes from a root signifying to shudder, and thus has an intense meaning. The use of this metaphor does not necessarily imply a knowledge of ch. xxiv. on the part of the exiles. But nothing is more probable than that they did know of it. Even if the news of a prophecy so favourable to them had not already reached them, why should not the ambassadors tell them of it, or even bring it in writing? A son of Shaphan would be well acquainted with all that Jeremiah had ever written.

18. With this verse cp. xxiv. 9, and also xix. 8, xxv. 18.

19. *but ye would not hear*] Really, it was not the exiles, but the inhabitants of Jerusalem who would not hear. Jeremiah was so often using this phrase to the people at home (*e.g.* ch. xxv. 3, 4, 7, 8) that it came quite naturally to him to use it where it was inappropriate. The preservation of this slip uncorrected is a proof of the reverent fidelity with which the text of the Bible has been handed down to us.

22. *a curse*] There is a play here of words, which probably was the cause why the death of these men passed into a proverb. One of them was named ben-Kolaiah; and they are to be made a curse, *kelâlâh*, because Nebuchadnezzar has roasted, *kâlâh*, them. This incidental mention of so horrible a method of punishment shews that the treatment of the three Jewish youths in Dan. iii. 20 was not unusual at Babylon. See note there.

23 Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and *am* a witness, saith the LORD.

24 ¶ *Thus* shall thou also speak to Shemaiah the ‖ Nehelamite, saying,

‖ Or, *dreamer.*

25 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that *are* at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying,

26 The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of the LORD, for every man *that is* [h] mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks.

[h] 2 Kin. 9. 11. Acts 26. 24.

27 Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you?

28 For therefore he sent unto us *in* Babylon, saying, This *captivity is* long: build ye houses, and dwell *in them;* and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

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23. *villany*] This word is almost everywhere else in the A. V. translated **folly**, to which custom has attached the right sense of *lewdness, unchastity*. Cp. Gen. xxxiv. 7; Deut. xxii. 21. There is one exception, Josh. vii. 15.

even I know] See Note at end of Chapter.

24—32. With *v.* 23 Jeremiah's letter ended. Appended to it without any introduction, but left to tell its own tale, is a narrative shewing its effects. The party of the false prophets was so greatly enraged at Jeremiah's interference with them, that Shemaiah their leader wrote to Zephaniah, who was now deputy high-priest, Pashur, ch. xx. 1, having been carried captive to Babylon with Jeconiah, urging him to restrain the prophet's zeal with the prison and the stocks. But Zephaniah, instead of lending himself to their revenge, shews the letter to Jeremiah, who thereupon writes to the exiles, denouncing Shemaiah's conduct as rebellion against God, and predicting his destruction with all his house.

24. *to Shemaiah*] Rather, **concerning**, as in *v.* 31; so in *v.* 16 the same preposition is translated, *of the king, i.e.* concerning him.

the Nehelamite] The rendering in the margin, *dreamer*, is utterly wrong. It means *one belonging to the village of Nehlam.* No such place occurs in Scripture, but we can scarcely expect every town great and small to be mentioned.

25. *letters*] Though this word is used in the plural of a single letter (2 K. xix. 14, xx. 12, &c.), yet here the A.V. is right in translating it in the plu., for evidently the letter to Zephaniah was distinct from that addressed to the people.

26. *in the stead of Jehoiada*] Apparently Zephaniah was not the immediate successor of Pashur (ch. xx. 1), nor in such troubled times is there anything remarkable in so rapid a succession. The idea of many commentators that by Jehoiada is meant the famous high-priest in the days of king Joash, 2 K. xi. 15, is disproved by the fact that Zephaniah was not his successor, but the high-priest Seraiah. Zephaniah was the pâkid.

that ye should be officers] Lit. *pâkids, deputy high-priests.* This shews that Jehoiada also was a pâkid only. The next words explain the nature of their office. The pâkid had the overcharge of the temple. The Hebrew lit. is *to be pâkids* **of** *the house of Jehovah.*

mad] See note on 2 K. ix. 11. Add that in the East madness is regarded as something divine, and that many of the symbolical actions of the prophets, such as that of Jeremiah going about with a yoke on his neck, would be mocked at by the irreverent as passing the line between prophecy and madness.

prison] Rather, **the stocks**, ch. xx. 2, where see note.

the stocks] Rather, **collar**. It is still found in this sense in the Arabic. The other meaning of *a close prison*, taken from a Samaritan root, is untenable. The sense requires not a severe punishment, but such as might be inflicted by the pâkid as head of the temple-police for maintenance of order. Offenders might be put in the pillory, or in the stocks, or even scourged, but not more.

28. *For therefore*] Lit. *For accordingly, for just so.* The meaning is that as Jeremiah is allowed to do as he likes at home without reproof, just so he meddler with things at Babylon. The less literal translation of the A. V. gives, however, much the same sense.

This captivity is *long*] Rather, **It is long.**

29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

31 Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie:

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; [z] because he hath taught [†] rebellion against the LORD.

[z] chap. 28. 16.
[†] Heb. *revolt.*

The omission of the noun is far more forcible than its insertion. What is long? God's anger, their punishment, the exile, the time necessary for their repentance: all is long to men who are homesick, and who will never live to see their country again.

NOTE on CHAP. XXIX. 23.

For הַיּוֹדֵעַ, a word of an irregular form, is probably to be read הוּא יוֹדֵעַ = הוּא יֹדֵעַ. The Hebrew would then signify, *I am one who knows and is a witness.* The correction of the Kri, הַיּוֹרֵעַ, is inadmissible, as the next word עֵד would then also require the article.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *God sheweth Jeremiah the return of the Jews.* 4 *After their trouble they shall have deliverance.* 10 *He comforteth Jacob.* 18 *Their return shall be gracious.* 20 *Wrath shall fall on the wicked.*

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.

3 For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and

JEREMIAH'S SEVENTEENTH PROPHECY.
Chaps. XXX.—XXXIII.
Israel's hope.

Almost unanimously critics regard these four chapters as a united whole, not meaning thereby that they were all written at the same time—the titles expressly negative this assumption—but that Jeremiah has here gathered together whatsoever God had revealed to him of happier import for the Jewish people. As was to be expected in one who lived at the time of a great crisis, the prophecies of Jeremiah have usually a very direct reference to his own days, with only here and there an allusion to such topics as the perpetuity of the nation, the certainty that the Gentiles would be gathered into the pale of the Jewish Church, and that a righteous Branch of David should arise, whose name would be Jehovah our Righteousness. But in these four chapters his proper subject is "the New Covenant," the very name by which the Gospel is known in most languages, though we call it the New Testament, a title of narrower meaning, but naturally arising out of the special sense given to the Greek word for covenant in Heb. ix. 16. In contrast then with the rolls of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, we here have one containing the nation's hope, of which it is remarkable that a considerable portion was written in the tenth year of Zedekiah, when the siege was drawing to an end, famine and pestilence busy in the city, its capture daily more imminent, all hope of succour past, and the prophet himself in prison. Yet in this sad pressure of earthly troubles Jeremiah could bid his countrymen look courageously onward to the fulfilment of those hopes, which had so constantly in his darkest hours comforted the heart and nerved the arm of the Jew. The roll consists of three portions: (1) "a triumphal hymn of Israel's salvation" (Hengstenb.), chh. xxx.; xxxi.; (2) the purchase of the field at Anathoth, as a pledge that after the Babylonian captivity the Jews would be restored to their land, ch. xxxii.; and (3) a direct promise of the return of their nation, and of the restoration of the Davidic throne, ch. xxxiii.

CHAP. XXX. 2. *Write...in a book*] This prophecy was not to be spoken to the people orally, as was the case with most of Jeremiah's predictions, but was intended to be read and meditated upon by them in private. This makes it exceedingly probable that the

Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

4 ¶ And these *are* the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5 For thus saith the LORD; We ‖ have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.

‖ Or, there is *fear, and not peace.*

6 Ask ye now, and see whether † a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

† Heb. *a male.*

7 [a] Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

[a] Joel 2. 11. Amos 5. 18. Zeph. 1. 14, &c.

8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and [b] David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.

[b] Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. Hosea 3. 5.

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date of these two chapters was also the tenth year of Zedekiah, immediately after the purchase of the field from Hanameel. In that act Jeremiah had received the assurance of Israel's restoration, and he now in the leisure of his prison completes the portraiture of the deliverance of his nation, that the exiles might carry his words with them to be their consolation and strength under their coming trials.

all the words] *i.e.* the roll was to be a summary of whatever of hope and mercy had been contained in previous predictions. This disposes of Nägelsb.'s view, who from the similarity of these two chapters to chs. iii.—vi. argues that they must be contemporaneous with them. Really the whole prophecy constantly refers to previous prophecies, cp. ch. xxx. 5, 6 with vi. 24, and xxii. 23, *v.* 10 with xxiii. 4, *v.* 14 with xxii. 20, ch. xxxi. 1 with iii. 18, *v.* 3 with ii. 2, *v.* 6 with iii. 14, *v.* 9 with iii. 21, 22, *vv.* 18, 19 with iii. 21—25, *vv.* 23, 24 with iii. 17, 18, *v.* 32 with iii. 14, *v.* 33 with iii. 16. Besides these references Graf has also collected numerous expressions similar to those used in earlier chapters.

3. *I will bring again the captivity...*] These words limit what was spoken indefinitely in *v.* 2. *All Jeremiah's words* do not mean all his prophecies, but the main points of the revelation made to him concerning this one subject.

Israel and Judah] This mention of them together prepares the mind for ch. xxxi., which consists of distinct messages, first to the ten tribes, and afterwards to Judah.

5. *of fear, and not of peace*] Better, as in the marg., **fear and no peace.** The prophet introduces his subject most dramatically. Israel is to be delivered, but instead of beginning his prophecy with the pæan of victory, he places his hearers in the centre of Babylon, and describes it as convulsed with terror as the armies of Cyrus draw near. *The voice of trembling* is thus the war-cry of the advancing host: while *fear and no peace* implies that even in the exiles there is only alarm at the prospect of the city where they had so long dwelt being destroyed. In similar terms our Lord describes the fall of Jerusalem as a time of great tribulation, even though the elect were to be saved, Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.

6. *whether a man doth travail with child*] *i.e.* the men are all so overcome with terror that you might imagine them to be women in the hour of their pangs, cp. ch. vi. 24, xxii. 23.

7. *that day*] *i.e.* the day of the capture of Babylon.

none is *like it*] Because Babylon, the seat of the first universal empire, fell suddenly when at the very height of its power. The fate nevertheless of Nineveh and that also of No-Amon was not altogether unlike that of Babylon, Nahum ii. 10—12, iii. 8, 10.

it is *even the time of Jacob's trouble*] Rather, *and it is a time of trouble to Jacob.* The capture of the city wherein they lived could not but be a time of trouble, lit. *of narrowness, i.e.* of anxiety to the Jews; for the usages of war were so brutal that they would be in danger when the enemy made their assault. But the capture of Babylon was essential to their deliverance. The last words would be more simply translated, *from which he shall be saved.*

8. *thy bonds*] See note on ch. xxvii. 2, and for *breaking the yoke*, cp. Isai. x. 27.

strangers shall no more serve themselves of him] *i.e.* shall no more exact forced labour of him, cp. ch. xxii. 13. There is here one of those sudden changes of person so common in Jeremiah. Jacob is first addressed in the second person, *thy neck, thy bonds*, then in the third, *shall serve themselves of him*, and then in *v.* 9 in the plu., *they shall serve.*

9. *they shall serve...David their king*] Not David in person, but the Sprout of David, prophesied of in ch. xxiii. 5, 6; and so the Targum paraphrases it, *they shall serve Messiah, Son of David, their king.*

[c] Isai. 41. 13. & 43. 5. & 44. 1. chap. 46. 28.

10 ¶ Therefore [c] fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make *him* afraid.

11 For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee [d] in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

[d] Psal. 6. 1. chap. 10. 24. & 46. 28.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Thy bruise *is* incurable, *and* thy wound *is* grievous.

13 *There is* none to plead thy cause, [†] that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines.

[†] Heb. *for binding up*, or, *pressing.*

14 All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; *because* thy sins were increased.

15 Why [e] criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow *is* incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: *because* thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.

[e] chap. 15. 18.

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10. *from afar*] *i.e.* from the most distant provinces of the Chaldæan empire.

11. *a full end*] Cp. ch. iv. 27, v. 18.

I will correct thee in measure] See note on ch. x. 24.

These two verses (*vv.* 10, 11) occur again with slight changes in ch. xlvi. 27, 28. Hitzig and Movers in both places reject them because they consider them to be very similar in style to the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah. But the only phrase peculiar to Isaiah is "my servant Jacob" (see Isai. xliv. 1, 2, xlv. 4, xlviii. 20, and cp. xli. 8, xliv. 21, xlix. 3). All the rest, though some of it occurs in Isaiah, is not peculiar to him, and much of it is not after his manner. On the other hand the contrast between the full end made with the heathen, and the certainty that Israel shall never so perish, is one of Jeremiah's most common topics.

12—17. These verses explain the thought in *v.* 11, that though Israel is to be corrected, it is "according to judgment, and not for her destruction." She is described therefore as grievously wounded and deserted by all her friends, but when she cries unto God because of her sins, He restores health to her and binds up her wounds.

12. *Thy bruise* is *incurable*] **Mortal**, fatal. See ch. xvii. 9.

thy wound is *grievous*] See ch. x. 19, xiv. 17. A somewhat similar phrase occurs also in ch. xv. 18.

13. There is *none to plead thy cause*] In the great assize of war Israel, abandoned by Egypt her ally, is given up to her enemies in as friendless a state as the defendant in a suit who has no one to be his advocate.

that thou mayest be bound up] This clause is wrongly connected by the Masorites with the preceding. It should be translated, **For binding thy wound healing plaister thou hast none.** According to his usual custom, Jeremiah in the first clause abandons the metaphor of a wound, which he had employed in *v.* 12, and compares Israel to a man accused in a law-court, whose cause no one will plead. He then returns again to his simile, and says that Israel is like a wounded man perishing for want of a bandage wherewith to staunch the blood.

14. This verse falls into three very regular portions:

All thy lovers have forgotten thee;
they seek thee not.
For I have smitten thee with the smiting of an enemy;
with savage chastisement.
Because of *the multitude of thine iniquity,*
because thy sins **are strong.**

Judah's lovers are the nations which once sought her alliance, see chs. xxii. 20, xxvii. 3. In the last clause both portions depend upon the preposition *because*, which ought not to be in Italics, inasmuch as the usage of our language requires its repetition, which the Hebrew does not.

15. The translation of this verse is settled by *v.* 14, and should be:

Why criest thou because of thy breaking?
because thy pain is grievous?
Because of *the multitude of thine iniquity,*
Because thy sins **are strong,**
I have done these things unto thee.

The Masorites have put the chief stop after *grievous*, and the A. V. which generally follows them deserts them here, where they are right. The word rendered *sorrow* means **bodily pain.** For the repetition of *because* see *v.* 14.

16 Therefore all they that devour
/Exod. 23. 22. Isai. 41. 11. thee /shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.

17 For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This *is* Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

18 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwellingplaces; and the city shall be builded upon her own [1] heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.

[1] Or, *little hill.*

19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

20 Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.

21 And their nobles shall be of

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16. *Therefore*] *i.e.* Because thou hast undergone thy punishment and cried out in consciousness of thy guilt.

they that spoil thee] See Note at end of Chapter.

17. *I will restore health unto thee*] Or, *I will place a bandage upon thee.* But see ch. viii. 22.

they called thee] Rather, *they* **have called** *thee.* It is the indefinite perfect, and the sense therefore is much the same as our present. The old confederates of Judah, when looking round for friends to enter into a new alliance, if Zion is mentioned, **call** *her an outcast, i.e.* one put away and rejected. *It is Zion*, they say, *no one seeketh after her.*

18—22. As Judah's chastisement is over, she must return to her land and rebuild her cities, which shall resound with the activity of joyous multitudes. And henceforward princes sprung from themselves shall be their governors, and there shall be an unbroken covenant between them and God. The prophet speaks of Judah as the type of the Church, with the Immanuel as her king.

18. *tents*] See ch. iv. 20. The word suggests that a considerable portion of the people were still nomads, cp. ch. xxxiii. 12, 13, where a period of happiness is described as consisting in an abundance of shepherds and their flocks.

the city shall be builded upon her own heap] City has no article and means not Jerusalem, but *each city* in opposition to *palace*, which also has no article. The *heap*, *Tel*, means an artificial mount to keep the city out of the reach of inundations, and to increase the strength of the fortifications. The cities of Babylonia constantly have *Tel* as part of their name, because the country was liable to be flooded. Cp. Tel-abib, Ezek. iii. 15. In Josh. xi. 13 it may mean a natural hillock. See note there.

and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof] Rather, *and each palace shall* **be inhabited** *according to its right, i.e.* suitably, with all the magnificence that a palace requires.

19. *out of them*] *i.e.* out of city and palace alike. This general prosperity causes their numbers to increase, and wealth and numbers bring power. The last words more exactly are, *I will multiply them, and they shall not* **become few**; *and I will honour them, and they shall not* **become mean**, *i.e.* despised, lightly esteemed.

20. *Their children*] Lit. *his*, *i.e.* Jacob's *children*, the children of the nation.

as aforetime] They shall be as numerous as in that golden age to which nations perpetually look back. To the Jew it was the era of David and Solomon.

congregation] Not the *kahal* for judicial purposes, &c., ch. xxvi. 9, but the *'êdah*, the whole multitude of the people.

21. *And their nobles...*] This verse should be translated, *And his* **glorious one** *shall spring from himself, and his ruler shall go forth from his midst: and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that hath* **pledged** *his heart, i.e.* hath staked his life, *to draw near unto me? saith Jehovah.* This verse first of all abrogates the Davidic kingship. After the return from exile the descendants of David are no longer to be the earthly rulers of the nation. The glorious ruler of Israel is to be a native prince springing from the midst of the people themselves, *i.e.* from a family on a level with the ordinary mass of the people. See note on Isai. xi. 1. Next, *God will cause him to draw near.* The pronoun cannot refer to the people, as Hitzig thought, for the subject of the verse is this native ruler, and naturally the prophet proceeds to tell us some peculiarity in which he is to be unlike

themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who *is* this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD.

22 And ye shall be [e] my people, and I will be your God.

23 Behold, the [h] whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a [†] continuing whirlwind: it shall [‖] fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.

24 The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done *it*, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.

[e] chap. 24. 7. & 31. 33. & 32. 38.

[h] chap. 23. 19, 20.

[†] Heb. *cutting.*

[‖] Or, *remain.*

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the old Davidic kings. But the phrase is distinctively used of the priests drawing near to execute their office, Exod. xix. 22; Lev. xxi. 21; Num. xvi. 5, &c. Their promised king, then, is to have the right to enter Jehovah's presence, as Moses of old, and as the high-priest was wont to enter into the Holy of Holies upon the great day of atonement. But the penalty for entering the presence of Jehovah was death (Num. viii. 19), and therefore the prophet asks, who would be so bold as to risk his life in thus entering God's presence? Certainly no mere ordinary king. And thus everything leads up to the exposition given in the Targum: "Messiah shall be revealed to them out of their own midst." He can draw near unto God without fear of death, because being in the form of God, and Himself God, He can claim equality with God, Phil. ii. 6. Ewald paraphrases the verse as follows: A native national king rules over the people, even Messiah, who also without fear of punishment dare enter into the Holy of Holies, and glory in His intimacy with God.

22. *ye shall be my people...*] This is the effect of Messiah's ministry. Men cannot become God's people, till there has been revealed one of themselves, a man, who can approach unto God, as being also God, and so can bridge over the gulf which separates the finite from the Infinite.

23, 24. These verses are repeated with some alterations from ch. xxiii. 19, 20, where they refer to the storm about to sweep away the false prophets. As they are found here in the LXX. and all the versions, the external evidence for their genuineness is conclusive. Nor is there that want of consecutiveness which some critics suppose. In *vv.* 21, 22 the prophet had reached a climax. He can say nothing greater or better than that the Church shall be governed by One who as God can enter the Father's presence. He therefore pauses, and when resuming his subject quotes these two verses, but with a new reference, namely, to God's judgment of Babel. From this new beginning he proceeds to fill up, in various particulars, the outline of Israel's future happiness given in *vv.* 18—22. These verses therefore would more appropriately be attached to the next Chapter, for which they would form a suitable introduction.

NOTE on CHAP. XXX. 16.

The C'tib, שֹׁאֲפַיִךְ, is a participle formed regularly upon Aramaic principles, for which the Kri substitutes שֹׁסַיִךְ, the more exact Hebrew form. But this obliterates a distinctive mark of the style and date of Jeremiah's writings.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 *The restoration of Israel.* 10 *The publication thereof.* 15 *Rahel mourning is comforted.* 18 *Ephraim repenting is brought home again.* 22 *Christ is promised.* 27 *His care over the church.* 31 *His new covenant.* 35 *The stability,* 38 *and amplitude of the church.*

AT the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

2 Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were* left of the sword found

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CHAP. XXXI. In ch. xxx. 3 God had promised to bring again the captivity both of Israel and Judah. To this promise the prophet now returns, addressing *all the families of Israel* in *v.* 1, then separately the ten tribes in *vv.* 2—22, then Judah in *vv.* 23—26, and then both together in *vv.* 27—40.

1. *At the same time*] Lit. **At that time**, *i.e.* the latter days mentioned in ch. xxx. 24. The restoration of Israel is not to take place till the whirlwind of Jehovah has executed His wrath upon the wicked.

2. *The people* which were *left of the sword*]

grace in the wilderness; *even* Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.

3 The LORD hath appeared [1] of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore [1] with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

4 Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy [a][1] tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

5 Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall [1] eat *them* as common things.

6 For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.

7 For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

[1] Heb. *from afar.*

[1] Or, *have I extended lovingkindness unto thee.*

[a] Exod. 15. 20. Judg. 11. 34.

[1] Or, *timbrels.*

[1] Heb. *profane them.*

Or, *A people left of the sword*, lit. *a people consisting of those left of the sword.* Two distinct explanations are given of this passage; (1) Rashi, followed by Ewald, understands it of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt: more correctly, (2) most modern commentators take it as a promise of the restoration of the ten tribes to their land. For the Israelites, on their departure from Egypt, could in no proper sense be called *remnants of the sword*, nor could God be said to appear to them *from afar* (see *v.* 3). But in ch. li. 50 the Jews delivered from Babylon, are called those *escaped from the sword*, and are commanded to remember Jehovah *afar off*.

in the wilderness] Many take this as referring to the desert which lay between Assyria and Palestine. It is more probably an allusion to the wilderness of Mount Sinai. As the Israelites on leaving Egypt found grace there, so shall the remnant of the ten tribes, delivered from the sword of Shalmanezer, and of the armies which have made Assyria their battle-field, find grace in their journey homeward.

when I went] The verb is really an infin., lit. *a going*. It has, however, the force of an imperative, and may be rendered **let me go**, or, *I will go to give Israel rest*. In taking it as a past tense, the A. V. has been misled by the preceding verb *has found grace:* but this is a prophetic perfect = the future.

3. *of old*] **From afar** (marg.). See ch. xxx. 10. To the Jew God was enthroned in Zion, and thus when His mercy was shewn unto the exiles in Assyria it came from a distant region, 2 Chro. vi. 20, 38.

with lovingkindness have I drawn thee] Rather, **I have continued** *lovingkindness* **unto thee**. Cp. Ps. xxxvi. 10, cix. 12. The suffix in the Hebr. is in place of a dative, see Ewald 'Gr.' § 313 b.

4. *O virgin of Israel*] *i.e.* the whole people, cp. ch. xiv. 17. A new era of prosperity is to begin, represented by the cities being rebuilt, and the populace joyously keeping holyday, see Ps. lxviii. 25.

5. *shall eat* them *as common things*] Rather, **shall eat the fruit**. Lit. *shall profane them*, but this simply means, shall enjoy the fruit for their own use. Cp. Isai. lxv. 21. For three years the fruit of a newly planted tree was not to be touched, that of the fourth year was consecrated to God, but on the fifth year it was profane, *i.e.* unconsecrated, and so might be applied to the owner's use, Lev. xix. 23—25; Deut. xx. 6.

6. *watchmen*] At the time of the new moon, watchmen were placed upon the heights to give notice of its first appearance. This verse then shews that the schism caused by Jeroboam is over. The Ephraimites equally with the tribe of Judah watch for the new moon that they may go up to Jerusalem to keep the appointed feasts.

7. *shout among the chief of the nations*] *Shout* **because of** *the chief of the nations.* Israel is the chief of the nations, Deut. xxvi. 19, and Jehovah summons mankind to rejoice, because the remnant of Israel is about to be restored to its old position. The words *publish ye, praise ye* mean, **praise ye aloud.**

8. *with them the blind...*] The deliverance shall be so complete that those who would ordinarily be unable to take so long a journey shall all be there, with none left behind. For the *north country*, see ch. iii. 12, 18: and for the *coasts of the earth*, see ch. xxv. 32.

a great company shall return thither] Really,

9 They shall come with weeping, and with [1] supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* my [b] firstborn.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock.

11 For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he.

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a [c] watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

15 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; [d] A

[1] Or, *favours.*

[b] Exod. 4. 22.

[c] Isai. 58. 11.

[d] Matth. 2. 18.

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hither. Not to the north country, but to Palestine, where Jeremiah wrote. *A company, kahal, congregation*, the word constantly used of Israel at the Exodus, Exod. xvi. 3; Lev. iv. 13, &c. as an organized community.

9. *with weeping*] Not for sorrow, but for joy, because of God's great goodness.

supplications] There is no authority for the marg. *favours*. The conviction that God is guiding them, encourages them to pray the more earnestly.

Ephraim is my firstborn] See 1 Chro. v. 1, 2. The house of Joseph is thus to be restored to its old preeminence. By having been the first to be given over into the power of its enemies, it might seem to have been the least regarded, but it is not so. If Israel repent, it will be the first to be forgiven. Jeremiah declares the same truth in ch. iii. 11, 18; but see also ch. vii. 15.

10. *the isles*] The coast land of the Mediterranean, ch. ii. 10, xxv. 22, used here to shew that the most distant countries are to hear and marvel at Israel's wonderful restoration to its land. See note on Isai. xx. 6.

12. *shall flow together to*] Omit the word *together*. After having come with singing to Mount Zion, the holy sanctuary of Judah, the ten tribes are then to flow away like a river down from Zion's height to their own land, there to reap the rich produce of their tillage. In Jerusalem they would be occupied with religious duties, but after these are rendered to God, they are to disperse each to his own fields. God's blessing consists of **corn** (not *wheat* only), *new wine*, or, *grape-juice* (Isai. lxv. 8), *fresh oil*, *lambs* and *calves*. Cp. Deut. xxviii. 51.

sorrow] Rather, **languish**, *pine*. It expresses the poverty and helplessness of exiles unable from homesickness and want of confidence to do anything with spirit. Restored to their homes, they will be as full of vigour as a garden irrigated with water under a southern sun.

13. *both young men and old together*] Rather, **and** *young men*, &c. *Both* gives the idea of the men dancing, which is incorrect. Except at a religious solemnity (2 S. vi. 14), dancing was confined to women. The word to be supplied is rejoice, *and young men and old* rejoice *together*.

14. *I will satiate...*] **Abundantly satisfy**, Hebr. *water*, see Ps. xxxvi. 8. A proof of the prosperity of the country. So numerous shall be the thank-offerings (which were also feasts for the offerer and his friends), that the priests with their families and households shall scarcely be able to consume the portions which are their share.

satisfied] *i.e.* **satiated**, they shall enjoy God's good gifts to the very full.

15—22. Thus far the restoration of the ten tribes has been set forth only in its political aspect: in this strophe we find its religious character, and therewith its cause explained. To bring this more clearly into view the prophet reverts to their unforgiven state. We see the land still lying waste: Rachel the mother of the great house of Joseph is weeping over her banished children, and they too are bemoaning their sins. And because chastisement has brought repentance, and with it forgiveness, therefore God decrees their restoration.

15. *A voice was heard in Ramah*] Ramah, generally known as ha-Ramah, *the height*, is mentioned, not as being Rachel's sepulchre, for which the passage usually quoted, 1 S. x. 2, is no proof, but because of its nearness to

voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not.

16 Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

18 ¶ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus;* Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed *to the yoke:* turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou *art* the LORD my God.

19 Surely [e] after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon *my* thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

[e] Deut. 30. 2.

20 *Is* Ephraim my dear son? *is he* a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels [†] are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

[†] Heb. *sound.*

21 Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way *which* thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

Jerusalem, from which it was distant about five miles. We find it subsequently used, ch. xl. 1, for the review of the captives previously to their being taken to Babylon, and all such as were unequal to the journey would there be put to death. As the mother of three tribes, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, Rachel is regarded as the mother of the whole ten. This passage is quoted by St Matthew, ch. ii. 18, not as a prophecy, but as a type. In Jeremiah it is a poetical figure representing in a dramatic form the miserable condition of the kingdom of Ephraim devastated by the sword of the Assyrians.

16. *thy work shall be rewarded*] Lit. *there is hire for thy labour.* Rachel's work had been that of bearing and bringing up children, and by their death she was deprived of the joy for which she had laboured: but by their being restored to her she will receive her wages, or hire. Cp. Gen. xxx. 18, where the same words *there is a hire* occur, formed into the name Issachar. See also 2 Chro. xv. 7.

17. *hope in thine end*] See ch. xxix. 11.

18. *as a bullock unaccustomed* to the yoke] Lit. *like an untaught calf.* The metaphor is taken from Hos. x. 11. Ephraim acknowledges that he had been chastised rightly, and for his good, because, like an untrained steer, he had resisted Jehovah's will.

19. *after that I was turned, I repented*] *i.e. after I had turned* away from Thee. The verb *to turn* is equivocal, see ch. iii. 14, 22, viii. 4. It may either be turning away from God, or turning to Him. In *v.* 18 it has the latter sense. Ephraim prays God to give him grace to return to Him: for so only will it be a real change of heart. Here it must be the former, as Hitz. and Graf have shewn, for repentance must precede—not follow—the return to God.

I was instructed] Lit. *made to know,* brought to my senses by suffering. See the note on Prov. x. 9. The smiting upon the thigh is a sign of sorrow, cp. Ezek. xxi. 17.

the reproach of my youth] *i.e.* the shame brought upon me by the sins of my youth, when I was "an untrained calf."

20. Is *Ephraim my dear son?*] Moved to compassion by Ephraim's lamentation, Jehovah is represented as wondering why He should thus shew Himself as tender and ready to forgive as parents are towards a spoiled child.

a pleasant child] Rather, **a darling** *child,* lit. *a child of delight,* see Isai. v. 7; Prov. viii. 30, 31.

since I spake against him] Or, *concerning him,* since I pronounced sentence upon him, and decreed his punishment. Though God has condemned Ephraim to national ruin and exile, yet is he still remembered with love.

my bowels are troubled] Lit. *sound, moan.* Cp. Isai. lxiii. 15. The metaphor expresses the deepest and most tender internal emotion.

21. *waymarks*] On the meaning of the word *tsiyun* see note on 2 K. xxiii. 17.

high heaps] Or, **signposts,** pillars to point out the way. The result of Jehovah's tender affection for Ephraim is his restoration, in preparation for which a number of the young and able-bodied members of the community are to go forward and mark out the route for the main company of the exiles.

22 ¶ How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, *and* mountain of holiness.

24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they *that* go forth with flocks.

25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.

27 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.

28 And it shall come to pass, *that* like as I have watched over them,

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set thine heart] Not as with us, *set thy affection*, for in Hebrew the heart is the seat of the intellect, but *turn thy thoughts* and attention *to the highway*, even *the way* by which *thou wentest*.

22. *How long wilt thou go about?*] Israel instead of setting itself to return hesitates, and goes hither and thither in a restless, uncertain mood. To encourage it therefore to firmer resolve God gives it the sign contained in the rest of the verse.

A woman shall compass a man] *i.e. the female shall protect the strong man.* So Schnurrer, followed by De Wette, Ges., Umbreit, &c. Numerous other expositions have been offered. Thus Ewald renders, *the woman shall be changed into a man;* Hitz., *the woman shall court the man;* Nägelsb., *the woman shall turn the man, i.e.* shall prove the stronger of the two; Hengstenb., *the woman shall keep close to the man,* so that he may protect her (not in any way *a new thing*); while Bp. Wordsworth abides by the patristic exposition, which sees in these words a prophecy of the miraculous conception of our Lord by the Virgin. Keil gives the sense excellently, where he says; "The new thing that God creates consists in this, that the woman, the weaker nature that needs help will with loving and fostering care surround the man, the stronger. Herein lies expressed a new relation of Israel to the Lord, a reference to a new covenant, which the Lord, *vv.* 31 sqq., will make with His people, and in which He so brings Himself down to the level of His Church, and so yields Himself to it, that it can lovingly embrace Him. This is the Messianic substance and kernel of these words."

23. *As yet,...*] Rather, **Again**, *once more.* The prophet now turns to Judah, and promises her not only a return from exile, but that Jerusalem shall be the object of the nation's religious veneration. By the *mountain of holiness* is meant not the temple only, but all Jerusalem, of which nevertheless the temple was the most sacred spot, and that by which all the rest was made holy.

24. *they* that *go forth with flocks*] *they that go* **about** *with flocks.* The verb is that regularly used of the nomad life. Thus both agriculture shall once again flourish in Judah, with its settled population and fixed abodes; and also shepherds shall move about in the wilderness with their flocks, wherever pasture is to be found.

25. *sorrowful*] Or, **languishing**, *pining* for hunger, see note on *v.* 12.

26. *Upon this I awaked,* &c.] There is much discussion as to who is the speaker of these words. But it cannot be Jehovah, because the time when He was punishing Judah could scarcely be compared to a sweet sleep. Nor can it be Judah, for the exile was no sweet sleep to the Jews. It must then be the prophet, who, seeming to himself to awake and look up in the midst of his sleep (whether ecstatic or not we cannot tell), rejoiced in a revelation so entirely consolatory, and unlike his usual message of woe.

27—34. Turning now to Israel and Judah united in one prosperous nation, the prophet shews that their happiness will rest upon the solid foundation of a true morality, which will make them conscious that their chastisement has been the result, not of the sins of their fathers, but of those which they have themselves committed, and that God's covenant depends not upon external sanctions, but upon a renewed heart.

27. *I will sow...*] So rapid shall be the increase of the Jews and Israelites that it shall seem as if children and young cattle sprang up out of the ground.

28. *as I have watched*] The word less

to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD.

f Ezek. 18. 2. 29 f In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

g Hebr. 8. 8. 31 ¶ Behold, the g days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, ‖ although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

‖ Or, *should I have continued an husband unto them.*

33 But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their

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correctly rendered in ch. i. 12 *hasten*, where see note. For the other verbs see ch. i. 10. As surely then as God watched over and provided for the fulfilment of the prophecies which foretold the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans, so surely will He with equal watchfulness provide for the accomplishment of the predictions which declare the coming happiness of the new dispensation.

29, 30. *a sour grape*] Better, *sour* **grapes**, as in Ezek. xviii. 2, the word being a collective noun. The idea that Jeremiah and Ezekiel modified the terms of the second commandment arises from a mistaken exegesis of their words. Already in Deut. xxiv. 16 the teaching of these prophets had been clearly stated, and when in ch. xxxii. 18 Jeremiah praised God for "recompensing the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them," he certainly did not suppose that he had abrogated this divine law. The final clause of the second commandment, which speaks of God as "shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Him," is not limited to the children of pious parents, but pledges God's character as surety for mercy equally to the children of wicked parents if only they repent and love Him. Children suffer the punishment of the sins of their parents in the tendency of the sin to repeat itself in an aggravated form in each generation, till in the third or fourth the race becomes so utterly depraved, physically and morally, that punishment can be delayed no longer. So then as regards this proverb of the sour grapes. The obdurate Jews made it a reproach to the divine justice that the nation was to be sorely visited for Manasseh's sin. But this was only because generation after generation instead of repenting had repeated the sins of that evil time, and been guilty of them constantly in a worse form. As this could not go on for ever, justice must at length have its course. The acknowledgment that each man died *for his own iniquity* was a sign of their return to a more just and right state of feeling.

31. *a new covenant*] In this promise Jeremiah's words reach their highest significance. A time is foretold which shall be to the nation as marked an epoch as was the Exodus. God then at Sinai made a covenant with His people, of which the sanctions were material, or (where spiritual) materially understood. Necessarily therefore the Mosaic Church was temporary, but the sanctions of Jeremiah's Church are spiritual—written in the heart—and therefore it must take the place of the former covenant, Heb. viii. 13, and must last for ever. The prophecy was fulfilled when those Jews who accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, expanded the Jewish into the Christian Church. Many commentators so write as if the Christian Church were different from the Jewish, and as if Gentiles had converted the Jews, and written for them the New Testament. Really it is the Jewish Church in its full development and spiritual form, as foretold by Jeremiah, and being now perfect it is necessarily catholic, and therefore the Gentiles possess in it equal rights, but they have no special prerogative, nor is the present order of things separated from that which preceded it in any other way than as being its full and final form.

32. *although I was an husband unto them*] *i.e.* although as their husband I had lawful authority over them. On the translation in Heb. viii. 9, see Note at end of Chapter.

33. *I will put my law in their inward parts,...*] The old law could be broken (*v.* 32); to remedy this God gives, not a new law, but a new power to the old law. It used to be a mere code of morals, external to the man, and obeyed as a duty: in Christianity it becomes an inner force, shaping the man's character from within. In obeying it therefore a man is acting in accordance with

inward parts, and write it in their
[h] chap. 24. 7. & 30. 22. hearts; [h] and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the
[i] Isai. 54. 13. John 6. 45. LORD: for [i] they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for
[k] chap. 33. 8. Micah 7. 18. Acts 10. 43. [k] I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

35 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, [l] which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night,
[m] Isai. 51. 15. which divideth [m] the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of
[n] Isai. 54. 9. chap. 33. 20. hosts *is* his name:

36 [n] If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD; If [o] heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.
[o] chap. 33. 22.

38 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner.

39 And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath.

40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and

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his own renewed nature. Thus the Sermon on the Mount is the old Mosaic law, but changed into principles of conduct, which reach down to a man's heart and conscience: and similarly, instead of gross material sacrifices of oxen and sheep, "we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God."

34. *for I will forgive their iniquity*] The foundation of the new covenant is the free forgiveness of sins (cp. Matt. i. 21). Hence the Gospel cannot be a formal code guaranteeing certain blessings to those who obey it; for it begins with the offer of an unconditional pardon: and it is the sense of this full unmerited love which so affects the heart as to make obedience henceforward an inner necessity.

35. *which divideth the sea when...*] Rather, *which* **stirreth up** *the sea* **so that** *its waves roar.* Cp. Isai. li. 15.

36. *If those ordinances depart...*] *If* **these** ... The appeal is to the unchangeableness of nature, see Pratt, 'Scripture and Science not at variance,' p. 183 (5th ed.). From the uniformity of God's operations in the material world, the prophet deduces the certainty of a similar uniformity in God's dealings with man in things spiritual.

a nation] **A people.** Israel has long ceased to be a nation, but though stripped of its territory, with no metropolis, no ruler, no power of making laws or coining money, it still exists as a numerous, influential, and distinct people. In Matt. xxviii. 20 Jeremiah's prophecy receives its Christian application, and Israel becomes the Church, with the promise of perpetual existence. And of it also the analogy holds true. It has no national existence, but its members ought to be a strongly marked people, distinct from all around, refusing to be merged in the world, while everywhere they pervade and influence it.

37. *all the seed*] Unworthy members of Israel may be cast away, but the race shall never entirely cease to exist.

38. *Behold, the days come*] The word *come* is added by the Masorites in the Kri. Probably rightly, for Jeremiah nowhere else omits it. Cp. *vv.* 27, 31.

to the LORD] Or, **for** *Jehovah.* The city shall be built, not merely to Jehovah's honour, but for His dwelling in the hearts of a people prepared to be His temple. See upon this new city Isai. lxv. 17—25; on *the tower of Hananeel,* Neh. iii. 1; Zech. xiv. 10; and on *the corner-gate,* 2 K. xiv. 13; Zech. xiv. 10.

39. *over against it upon the hill Gareb*] Or, *straight along the hill Gareb.* This name does not occur elsewhere, but as its meaning probably is *the hill of lepers,* it must have been outside the old walls, and, as Graf shews, towards the south-west.

Goath] **Goah.** Nothing is known of this place. The Syriac supposes it to have been a knoll, while the Targ. translates *cow-pool,* taking it from a verb which means *to low.* The notion of Vitringa and Hengstenberg that it was Golgotha is altogether untenable.

40. *the whole valley of the dead bodies*] Probably some part of the valley of ben-Hinnom. The word translated *dead bodies* is used both of the carcases of animals, and of the bodies of criminals, &c., cast out unburied.

ashes] The word properly means *fat,* but is used in Lev. vi. 10 of the mixture of fat

all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, *shall be* holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

and ashes, which remained after the burning of a sacrifice. This was to be placed temporarily at the side of the altar, but finally carried "without the camp into a clean place." As the valley of Hinnom was not defiled till the time of Josiah, some part of it had probably been originally set aside for the reception of these ashes, and this was not interfered with. As these ashes, however, were the receptacle for other refuse, Lev. i. 16, they were probably not considered themselves clean.

and all the fields...] This is a correction of the Masorites. See Note at end of Chapter.

the horse gate] See Neh. iii. 28.

holy unto the LORD] The inscription upon the high priest's mitre, Exod. xxviii. 36. The main point in Jeremiah's description of the new Jerusalem is not its great extent, though it would have covered somewhat more space than the old city, and much more than Nehemiah included within his walls: but that it took in and consecrated spots which previously had been unclean. If we compare this with the prophecy in Zech. ii. 4, the conclusion seems evident that Jeremiah's words are to be spiritually understood. His city is one that renders what was before unclean, holy unto Jehovah. Compare with this St John's new Jerusalem, especially Rev. xxi. 27.

NOTES on CHAP. XXXI. 32, 40.

32. In the LXX. and in Heb. viii. 9 the last clause of this verse is translated thus, *because they continued not in* (=brake) *my covenant, and I disregarded them, saith the Lord.* This rendering is ably defended by Turpie, 'The Old Test. in the New,' p. 251, but in ch. iii. 14 the LXX. themselves render the phrase *I will be your lord, i.e.* husband. In this place, however, the Syr. agrees with the LXX., but in ch. iii. 14 it has *I have pleasure in you*, which is the rendering of the Targ. here, while the Vulg. has *ego dominatus sum eorum.* The balance of authority is thus decidedly in favour of the A. V., and probably the rendering of the LXX. was suggested not so much by the words, as by the grammar, which it makes more easy. But see note on ch. iii. 14.

40. The C'tib has הַשְּׁרְמוֹת, which is confirmed by the reading of the LXX. Ἀσαρημώθ. On the other hand the reading is שְׁרֵמוֹת in the parallel place, 2 K. xxiii. 4, and the LXX. have there Σαδημώθ, and the Masorites substitute the same reading here. The change makes everything easy, as the meaning *fields* for שְׁרֵמוֹת is certain. But the concurrence of the LXX. with the C'tib seems to prove that the right reading here is שַׁרְמוֹת, only we then have a word for which no derivation exists in Hebr. Of the various meanings suggested from the cognate dialects that of Graf seems best, *and all the quarries up to the brook Kedron.*

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 *Jeremiah, being imprisoned by Zedekiah for his prophecy,* 6 *buyeth Hanameel's field.* 13 *Baruch must preserve the evidences, as tokens of the people's return.* 16 *Jeremiah in his prayer complaineth to God.* 26 *God confirmeth the captivity for their sins,* 36 *and promiseth a gracious return.*

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Ju-

CHAP. XXXII. We have in this chapter the narrative of the purchase of a field by Jeremiah as a sign that the Jews should once again possess the land. The Chaldæans were already besieging the city, the prophet was in prison for foretelling its certain capture, and yet he bought with all the proper legal solemnities an estate, of which according to Lev. xxv. 25 he had the right of redemption. The price apparently was small, but was more than the land commercially was worth. Jeremiah was now verging on sixty: only ten of the seventy years of the captivity had passed by: even when the exiles returned the land would be too wide for their shrunken numbers, and the best of it might be had almost for asking. But though the estate was not worth the purchase, the opportunity was precious as a means of assuring the people that God would certainly bring them back. Jeremiah therefore buys it openly, and takes means for the preservation of the title deeds: but he records, *vv.* 16—25, how his heart then misgave him, upon which, *vv.* 26—44, God unfolds to him the full meaning of the sign, and assures him of the certainty of Israel's restoration.

1. The siege of Jerusalem began in Zedekiah's ninth year, ch. xxxix. 1, but was temporarily raised upon the approach of an

dah, which *was* the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's house.

3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus
[a] chap. 34. 2. saith the LORD, [a] Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;

4 And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of
[b] chap. 34. 3. the Chaldeans, but shall surely [b] be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes;

5 And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.

6 ¶ And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

7 Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that *is* in Anathoth: for the [c] right of redemption *is* thine to buy *it*. [c] Lev. 25. 24. Ruth 4. 4.

8 So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance *is* thine, and the redemption *is*

Egyptian army, xxxvii. 5, at which time Jeremiah endeavouring to leave Jerusalem was arrested, ib. 13, and remained in custody to the end of the siege. But though ill used at first, xxxvii. 16, he seems after his complaint to Zedekiah to have been provided with roomy quarters, ib. 21, xxxviii. 13, and his friends were permitted free access to him, xxxii. 12, xxxviii. 1, and Zedekiah regarded him with considerable respect, xxxvii. 17, xxxviii. 14. For *the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar*, cp. ch. xxv. 1, lii. 12.

2. *in the court of the prison*] Or, *the court of the* **guard**, a part of the king's palace, Neh. iii. 25, probably where the royal guard had its quarters. There would no doubt always be a picket on duty in the guard-chamber at the entrance of the court, but in his own apartment Jeremiah was probably left unmolested.

3. *had shut him up*] There is no contradiction between this statement and that in ch. xxxvii. 15. We have here a mere general account without the details, and when Zedekiah had delivered the prophet from the hand of the princes he probably still detained him in the court of the guard on some such plea as is here given. For the prophecies on which the charge was grounded see ch. xxi. 4—7, 9.

4. This verse is repeated almost verbatim in ch. xxxiv. 3.

5. *until I visit him*] As Jerome points out, the words are enigmatical, for "visitation means both consolation and punishment." Zedekiah's was a harder fate than the words suggest, ch. xxxix. 6, 7, lii. 11, but such things are mercifully concealed from men, nor was it the business of prophecy unnecessarily to aggravate human sufferings. The words too of ch. xxxiv. 5 make us hope that the poor blinded king, though detained in strict custody, was not otherwise unkindly treated after he had reached Babylon, and was held in honour by the exiles there.

7. *Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle*] Though Hanameel was strictly the first-cousin of Jeremiah, he is called here and in *v.* 12 his uncle. But in Hebrew all the terms of relationship are used in a more loose way than with us, and the word for *uncle* really means *love*, Song of Sol. i. 2, 4, and *beloved*, see Isai. v. 1, which is literally, *I will sing to my well-beloved a song of my uncle, touching his vineyard*. The word then is just as applicable to the *cousin*, for which relationship there is no word in Hebrew, as to the uncle.

the right of redemption is *thine to buy* it] The person who had the right of redeeming a property sold to a stranger had also the right of pre-emption. In fact no one would buy a property over the head of a person who had the power to make him sell it again. It was the right of pre-emption which Jeremiah exercised. See on this law, Lev. xxv. 23—28; Ruth iv. 6.

8. *the right of inheritance* is *thine*] Hanameel therefore had no children, and at his death the land would have been Jeremiah's by right of birth. According to the law, Num. xxxv. 5, it must have been part of the suburbs of Anathoth, within the distance of 2000 cubits, *i.e.* less than a mile, which was all the priests and Levites might cultivate. But probably the law was not very strictly kept.

thine; buy *it* for thyself. Then I knew that this *was* the word of the LORD.

9 And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, *even* ‖seventeen shekels of silver.

‖ Or, *seven shekels and ten pieces of silver.*

10 And I †subscribed the evidence, and sealed *it*, and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the money in the balances.

† Heb. *wrote in the book.*

11 So I took the evidence of the purchase, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open:

12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's *son*, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

13 ¶ And I charged Baruch before them, saying,

14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evi-

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Then I knew, &c.] Apparently Jeremiah had first a strong presentiment that Hanameel would offer him the land, and that he ought to buy it, and when his cousin actually appeared he knew that his presentiment was from God.

9. *seventeen shekels of silver*] Lit. *seven shekels and ten of silver*, probably a legal formula. The sum was about £2. 2*s*. 6*d*. of our money, but silver was worth so much more in those days that the price was considerable. David, at a time of great prosperity, only gave fifty shekels for Araunah's threshing-floor with his oxen and implements, 2 S. xxiv. 24, and Menahem exacted the same sum of "his mighty men of wealth," as a forced contribution to the king of Assyria, 2 K. xv. 20. Long afterwards thirty shekels purchased the potter's field with immediate possession, Matt. xxvii. 7. All that Jeremiah bought was Hanameel's life-interest up to the year of Jubile, and no man's life was worth much in a siege like that of Jerusalem. As Jeremiah had no children, at his death the land would devolve to the person who would have inherited it had he not bought it. It was doubtless too the increasing severity of the famine resulting from the siege which made Hanameel eager to sell, and the same cause would make men unwilling to buy. It is, moreover, the density of population which makes land valuable, but large masses of the people had already been destroyed in war or carried captive with Jeconiah to Babylon. Where the population is sparse, men live by hunting and pasturing cattle (Isai. vii. 21—25), not by agriculture. Finally, Jeremiah bought what never was and never could have been of the slightest use to him, and gave for it what in the growing urgency of the siege might have been very serviceable to himself. Still, as the next heir, it was Jeremiah's duty to buy the estate, independently of the importance of the act as a sign to the people, and evidently he gave the full value.

10—14. These verses should probably be translated thus: *And I wrote* the particulars of the purchase *in the deed* (the article implying that this was the usual practice), *and sealed it, and made the witnesses witness it, and I weighed the silver in the balances. And I took the purchase-deed, both that which was sealed* containing *the offer and the conditions, and that which was open: and I gave the purchase-deed to Baruch the son of Neriyah, the son of Mahseyah, before the eyes of Hanameel my uncle, and before the eyes of the witnesses who subscribed the purchase-deed, before the eyes of all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard-house. And I charged Baruch in their presence, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, Take these deeds, even this purchase-deed, both that which is sealed, and this open deed, and put them into an earthenware vessel, that they may continue many days.* Evidently there were two indentures, of which one was called *the purchase-deed*, and was signed by the purchaser and the witnesses. Nothing is said of the seller signing the deed, but probably the witnesses were officials, and they recited that the transaction had taken place in due form. It was then sealed, not in our sense of appending a seal in place of signatures, but to close it up. The open deed was probably an exact copy, and was that intended for common use. In case its authenticity was called in question, the sealed copy would have to be produced before the judge, and after careful inspection of the seal and proof of its genuineness, it would be opened, and if its contents agreed with those of the open deed, the decision would be in the buyer's favour.

By the *offer* is probably meant the specification. The word means *that which is fixed, settled*, and thus it would contain a description of the land, &c. The *conditions*, lit. *the statutes*, would be the stipulations and terms of the sale, *e.g.* as to its restoration at the year of jubile, its price, and so on. The placing of the deeds in a jar was of course peculiar to this sale, and was intended to preserve them from damp during the long years of the exile.

dences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.

15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

16 ¶ Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying,

17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* there is nothing ‖ too hard for thee:

‖ Or, *hid from thee.*

18 Thou shewest [d] lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, *is* his name,

[d] Exod. 34. 7. Deut. 5. 9.

19 Great in counsel, and mighty in † work: for thine [e] eyes *are* open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:

† Heb. *doing.*
[e] Job 34. 21. Prov. 5. 21. chap. 16. 17.

20 Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, and in Israel, and among *other* men; and hast made thee a name, as at this day;

21 And hast brought forth thy people Israel [f] out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with great terror;

[f] Exod. 6. 6. 2 Sam. 7. 23. 1 Chron. 17. 21.

22 And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey;

23 And they came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them:

24 Behold the ‖ mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it,

‖ Or, *engines of shot.*

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15. *shall be possessed*] *Shall be* **bought.** The buying of houses, lands, and vineyards, implies that they are once again objects of desire, and is therefore a proof that the population has become numerous.

16—25. Jeremiah obeys God's command, and purchases the land, but the whole transaction seems so contrary to the tenor of his previous prophecies, and so unreasonable in the face of the siege and the seventy years' exile, that his mind misgives him, and he carries his difficulty to the throne of God in prayer, that he may have his doubts set at rest. After a long preamble, in which he magnifies God's omnipotence, *v.* 17, His justice, *v.* 18, His providence, *v.* 19, and His former goodness to His people, *vv.* 20—22, he sets forth Israel's sin and the punishment now in course of execution, *vv.* 23, 24, and contrasts with this the command to purchase the land, *v.* 25.

17. *Ah Lord* GOD *!*] **Alas, O Lord God!** See note ch. i. 6.

too hard] Lit. *there is nothing too* **wonderful** *for Thee*, Cp. Gen. xviii. 14. The rendering in the marg., *hid from Thee*, is altogether wrong.

18. *and recompensest*] See note on ch. xxxi. 29. The recompence is placed in the bosom, because in the East the garments are so arranged as to form a pocket there. Thus then men must receive and carry with them God's requital for their deeds.

20. *unto this day*] The sense is, *Who hast set, i.e.* wrought *signs and wonders in the land of Egypt*, and hast continued working them *unto this day*, **both** *in Israel and among men, i.e.* the heathen, Isai. xliii. 4. Cp. ch. xi. 7, xxv. 18.

21. This verse is almost the same as Deut. xxvi. 8. For *the terror*, which even neighbouring nations felt at the miracles in Egypt, cp. Exod. xv. 14.

22. *thou didst swear*] Cp. ch. xi. 5.
a land flowing, &c.] Cp. Exod. iii. 8.

23. *possessed*] See note on *inherit*, ch. viii. 10.
thy law] See Note at end of Chapter.

24. *the mounts*] See note on ch. vi. 6.
is given] Not merely the prophetic perfect, but as the enemy's works have reached the walls, all sallies have been repulsed, and famine and pestilence are raging within the city, its capture has become a certainty.

because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest *it*.

25 And thou hast said unto me, O Lord GOD, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

27 Behold, I *am* the LORD, the [g] God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?

28 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it:

29 And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, [h] upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger.

30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD.

31 For this city hath been to me *as* [†] a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day; that I should remove it from before my face,

32 Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

33 And they have turned unto me the [†] back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching *them*, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.

34 But they [k] set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it.

[g] Numb. 16. 22.

[h] chap. 19. 13.

[†] Heb. *for my anger.*

[†] Heb. *neck.*

[i] chap. 2. 27.

[k] chap. 23. 11.

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25. *And thou hast said*] It is enough to place the command side by side with the state of Jerusalem to shew how contrary it is to all the rules of human prudence. Having so done the prophet waits in faith, sure that God will explain to him his difficulty.

26—44. The answer is divided into two parts, in the first of which, *vv.* 26—35, the sins of Judah are shewn to be the cause of her punishment, while in the second, *vv.* 36—44, the prophet is taught that this punishment was not for Judah's destruction, but for her amendment, that upon her repentance she might become in a truer sense the people of Jehovah, and be united to Him by an everlasting covenant. The substance of the first part has been repeatedly given before.

27. *too hard*] *too* **wonderful**. See on *v.* 17.

28. *I will give*] Or, **I am giving**. The act has begun.

29. *and burn it*] The destruction of Jerusalem by fire was rendered necessary by the command given in Deut. xiii. 16.

30. *from their youth*] This answers to the mention of Egypt in *v.* 20. God's mighty deeds for Israel began in Egypt, and so did Israel's sin. So in ch. ii. 2 the Exodus is called the time of Israel's youth.

the children of Israel] Israel's fall was the most rapid, but as Judah has arrived at the same degree of guilt, though more slowly, she must suffer the same punishment. See Introd. to ch. iii. 6.

31. *a provocation of mine anger*] Lit. *For upon My anger and upon My fury was to Me this city from the day...* The construction is unusual, but probably *upon* is put instead of *for* (cp. עַל־רְצוֹן, Isai. lx. 7, where see note, with לְרָצוֹן, ib. lvi. 7), and the right rendering is *For this city has been to me a cause of anger and fury from the day...* Jeremiah often interchanges these prepositions; see note on ch. xxxiii. 24.

the day that they built it] This is not to be taken literally of the day when Jerusalem became the capital of the nation, but means *from the earliest time.*

32. In this and the three following verses a fuller description is given of those sins which had made the removal of Judah a necessary act of the divine justice.

33. *though I taught them*] Strictly an infin. like those in ch. vii. 9. The literal rendering is, *And there was a teaching of them, even a rising early and teaching, but they hear not* so as *to receive correction.*

34, 35. These verses are repeated from

35 And they built the high places of Baal, which *are* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to [l] cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto [m] Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

36 ¶ And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;

37 Behold, I will [n] gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:

38 And they shall be [o] my people, and I will be their God:

39 And I will [p] give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me [†] for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:

40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away [†] from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land [†] assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

[l] chap. 7. 31. & 19. 5.
[m] Lev. 18. 21.
[n] Deut. 30. 3.
[o] chap. 24. 7. & 30. 22. & 31. 33.
[p] Ezek. 11. 19.
[†] Heb. *all days.*
[†] Heb. *from after them.*
[†] Heb. *in truth*, or, *stability.*

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ch. vii. 30, 31, but with two important variations. *Baal* is put for *Tophet*, as in ch. xix. 5, and *to Molech* instead of *in the fire*. The identification of Baal with Molech is most important, for the ancients themselves often made the mistake of confounding him with Saturn, the star whose influences are all sinister. Equally wrong, but more modern, is the form of the myth which confounds him with Kronos. Molech the *king* and Baal the *lord* are simply different names of the sun-god, but in altered relations. Molech is the sun as the mighty fire, which in passing through the signs of the Zodiac burns up its own children (Creutzer, 'Symbolik,' II. 267; Ges. 'Mon. Phoen.' pp. 448, 453). It is an old Canaanitish worship, carried by the Phœnicians to all their colonies, and firmly established in Palestine at the time when the Israelites conquered the country. See note on Lev. xx. 2—5; and on the meaning of *to pass through*, see note on ch. vii. 31.

36. *And now therefore*] This resumes the argument from *v.* 27. Nothing is too wonderful for Jehovah, and though the capture of Jerusalem seems to involve the utter extinction of the nation, yet really there is a restoration in store for it. The intermediate verses justify parenthetically the severity of Judah's punishment.

37. *Behold, I will gather them*] As *the city* was the object of the prophecy in *v.* 36, we might have expected a more direct reference to it. But virtually the inhabitants are the city. It would have been no comfort to the exiles to know that the houses and walls of Jerusalem would be rebuilt and occupied by another race: their wish was to return and inhabit Judæa themselves. Add, that as the destruction of Jerusalem involved the dispersion of its inhabitants, so their being gathered back involved the rebuilding of the city.

39. *one heart, and one way*] In ch. iii. 13 the manifold paths of sin are described as the scattering of men's ways, but under the new covenant they will with one consent walk in the one narrow path of right-doing, Matt. vii. 14. Cp. also Isai. liii. 6.

that they may fear me for ever] An allusion to Deut. iv. 10. Similarly the next clause is taken from Deut. vi. 24. *For ever*, lit. is *all the days*, *i.e.* every day, constantly.

40. *to do them good*] By putting a comma before these words the A. V. wrongly connects them with the first clause, *I will make a covenant*. Really God promises that His new covenant, ch. xxxi. 31, shall be eternal, and confirms this by the assurance that it should never be broken on either side. Not on God's side, *for I will not turn away from them to do them good*, *i.e.* I will never cease from doing them good: nor on their side, for *I will put My fear in their hearts that they depart not from Me*. In these two conditions consists the certainty of the eternal duration of the covenant, for which see Matt. xxviii. 20.

41. *assuredly*] Lit. **in truth**, see ch. xiv. 13, *i.e.* in verity, in reality. It refers to God's firm purpose. The rendering of the A. V., as also that in the marg., *in stability*, makes it refer to the safety and security of the people. The planting in the first covenant had been imperfect, and therefore it ended in an uprooting. And necessarily so, for the first covenant was one of duty and rested on

42 For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

43 And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, *It is* desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal *them*, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

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mutual obligations. But the new covenant is one of grace, indicated by God's rejoicing over His people, and planting them with His whole heart. And such a covenant, the mercies of which spring spontaneously from His love, God had promised from the first. See Deut. xxx. 9.

42. *Like as...*] Cp. ch. xxxi. 28.

43. *And fields shall be bought*] Lit. *The field*, not Hanameel's, but the open uninclosed country, ch. iv. 17. A considerable population must have grown up before this became of value. In the next verse it is plu., *fields*, and there refers to the several portions of it which belonged to individuals, and of which the boundaries were shewn by landmarks.

44. *subscribe evidences*] **Shall write it in the deed.** See on *v.* 10.

in the land of Benjamin, &c.] In order to bring the certainty of the return from exile more vividly before the mind, the prophet enumerates the several subdivisions of the territory of the kings of Judah. See upon them, ch. xvii. 26; Josh. x. 40; Judg. i. 9.

NOTE on CHAP. XXXII. 23.

The C'tib is בְּתוֹרָתוֹ, *in thy laws;* but as (1) the form is irregular, that found elsewhere being תּוֹרֹת, and as (2) the Torah or law of Moses is certainly meant, the inserted ו is probably a clerical error, and the Kri is right in reading בְּתֹרָתִי.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 *God promiseth to the captivity a gracious return,* 9 *a joyful state,* 12 *a settled government,* 15 *Christ the Branch of righteousness,* 17 *a continuance of kingdom and priesthood,* 20 *and a stability of a blessed seed.*

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet [a] shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD [b] the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD *is* his name;

3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and [1] mighty things, which thou knowest not.

4 For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses

[a] chap. 32. 2, 3.

[b] Isai. 37. 26.

[1] Or, *hidden.*

CHAP. XXXIII. This chapter is by the superscription directly attached to ch. xxxii., the promises of which it confirms, but gives them a more directly spiritual meaning. The prophet foreshews in it the happiness of the returning exiles, *vv.* 1—14, of which the culminating glory is Messiah's birth, *vv.* 15, 16, in whom both the Levitical priesthood and the Davidic kingdom are combined, *vv.* 17, 18, and God's covenant with mankind made perpetual, *vv.* 19—26.

1. *in the court of the prison*] **Of the guard**, ch. xxxii. 2.

2. *the maker thereof*] Or, *Thus saith Jehovah the doer of it, Jehovah who formeth it, that he may establish it, Jehovah is His name.* The pronouns are fem., but as the Aramaic tongues have only two genders, it became the rule to use the fem. impersonally. Thus *it* means whatsoever Jehovah wills.

3. *mighty things, which thou knowest not*] Or, **hidden** *things* (marg.). The word literally means *fortified*, and is usually connected with cities, and rendered in the A. V. *walled*, or more frequently *fenced* and *defenced*. As the metaphor is harsh, the correction of Ewald is very probable. By the slightest possible alteration (כ for ב) we have the very same

of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword;

5 They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *it is* to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.

6 Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will [c] pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

[c] chap. 31. 34. Micah 7. 18.

9 ¶ And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

10 Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say *shall be* desolate with-

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words as are found in Isai. xlviii. 6, and translated there "hidden things and thou didst not know them." These two verses are not in Jeremiah's usual style, but resemble that of Isaiah, though only one other word (namely *formed*, rendered *purposed* in Isai. xlvi. 11) is actually found in Isai. xl.—lxvi. As the whole context shews that the clause in Isai. xlviii. 6 is original, it must be a quotation here, whether given literally as Ewald supposes, or made into a "dark saying" by being slightly altered.

4. *thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword*] Rather, **against** *the mounts, and* **against** *the sword.* In ancient sieges as the works of the enemy approached the walls, it was usual to build inner fortifications, and for this purpose houses were pulled down both to give the vacant space necessary, and also to supply materials. Cp. Isai. xxii. 10. *Swords*, translated there *axes*, are mentioned in Ezek. xxvi. 9 as used for breaking down the towers in the walls. See note on ch. v. 17.

5. *They come to fight*] These words are very puzzling, but are found in all the versions except the LXX., and no probable emendation has been offered. To understand them literally of the houses fighting with the Chaldæans is impossible, and in no way could houses be said to fill themselves with the dead bodies of men. It is necessary therefore to supply *the Jews* as the subject and translate, *While they, i.e.* the Jews, *come to fight with the Chaldæans, and to fill them, i.e.* the houses, *with the dead bodies of men whom I* Jehovah *have slain...* See Note at end of Chapter.

6. *I will bring it health and cure*] *I will* **lay upon it** *a bandage* (ch. viii. 22, xxx. 17) *and healing, i.e.* **a healing bandage,** a plaister with healing medicines.

I will cure them] The first clause promised that the ruins of the city should be repaired, this gives similar comfort to the inhabitants. The sudden change from *it, i.e.* the city, to *them, i.e.* the people, is common in Hebrew.

and will reveal unto them] This is probably the best rendering. God will lay open before them a hidden treasure whence they may take **an** *abundance* (there is no article in the Hebr.) *of peace and truth, i.e.* security, ch. xiv. 13, arising from God's faithfulness. The other proposed rendering is *I will roll down upon them*, pour upon them, *an abundance*, &c. See note on ch. xi. 20.

7. *the captivity of Judah and...Israel*] The breach in the covenant-people caused by Jeroboam's revolt is to be healed, and both parts of the nation built up, *i.e.* firmly established in their land as they were *at the first, i.e.* before their sins had provoked God to anger.

8. *I will cleanse...*] The forgiveness of sins consequent upon repentance is the distinctive mark of the new covenant, ch. xxxi. 34. See upon this cleansing Zech. xiii. 1; 1 John i. 7.

9. *And it*] The city, as at the beginning of *v.* 6.

they shall fear and tremble] Not with joy (Keil), but with terror, because of the eternal opposition between right and wrong, truth and error. For the nations of the earth as opposed to Israel represent the world as opposed to the Church. Keil rests his view upon a supposed opposition between this and the promise that Jerusalem should be *a name of joy...before all the nations of the earth;* but it is so *to Me, i.e. to God*, not to them.

10. *this place, which ye say* shall be *deso-*

out man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,

[d] chap. 7. 34. & 16. 9.

11 The [d] voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

12 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down.

13 In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*, saith the LORD.

14 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 ¶ In those days, and at that time, will I cause the [e] Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

[e] Isai. 4. 2. & 11. 1. chap. 23. 5.

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late] *Of which ye say*, It is desolate... This place is Judæa, more fully described afterwards as *the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem*. The prophet first sees the land as it lay silent and desolate during the seventy years' captivity: and then describes with much amplification the two things, men and cattle, without which land is valueless. In *vv.* 10, 11, we have the joyous life of men, and in *vv.* 12, 13, we see the land covered everywhere with shepherds and their flocks.

11. *Praise the* LORD...] In many of the later psalms we find these words used as the customary formula of thanksgiving, cp. Pss. cvi. 1, cvii. 1, cxviii. 1, cxxxvi. 1, and from its occurrence also in 2 Chro. v. 13, vii. 3, 6, &c. we gather that it was a regular part of the liturgical service of the temple.

the voice of them that shall say,...and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise] *The voice of them that* say...*as they bring praise, i.e.* a thank-offering *into the house of Jehovah.* Cp. ch. xvii. 26; Ps. lvi. 12.

I will cause...as at the first] *i.e.* I will restore the country to the condition in which it was before the captivity, and when it was still unpolluted by the sins which have brought upon it so heavy a chastisement.

12. *an habitation*] *A shepherd's encampment*, ch. vi. 2 note, ix. 10. The last words, *causing* their *flocks to lie down*, mean gathering them into the fold at night. In an unenclosed country one of the most beautiful incidents of pastoral life is the slow winding of the flocks homewards to their folds, and to this David refers where he says, *In grassy pastures he shall make me lie down*, Ps. xxiii. 2.

13. *under the hands of him that telleth* them] So Milton, 'L'Allegro,' "Every shepherd tells his tale," *i.e.* counts the number of his sheep. Cp. Virg. 'Ecl.' III. 34. For the regions enumerated, see ch. xxxii. 44.

14. *that good thing*] Better, *the good word*, see ch. xxix. 10, where it is used of the restoration after the seventy years of exile, but here it refers to the promise already given in ch. xxiii. 5, 6, which is now repeated with some important variations.

unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah] Lit. *and upon* (or *concerning*) *the house of Judah.* Hengstenberg lays stress upon this difference of prepositions, but Jeremiah uses the latter (עַל) in so lax a manner that we are not justified in attaching importance to it. Cp. ch. xi. 2, xviii. 11, xxiii. 35, xxv. 2, xxxii. 31, &c.

15, 16. The principal differences in these verses from ch. xxiii. 5, 6, are *I will cause to grow up* for *I will raise; Branch of righteousness* for *righteous Branch;* the omission of the clause *a king shall reign and prosper;* the substitution of *Jerusalem* for *Israel*, and chief of all the application of the name *Jehovah our righteousness* to that city. The change of *justice in the earth* into *righteousness in the land*, is due simply to the translators of the A.V., the Hebr. in both places being the same.

will I cause the Branch...to grow up] Lit. *I will cause the Sprout...to sprout unto David.* The omission of the clause *a king shall reign*, &c. is owing to there being here no contrast between the Messianic and the actual kings of David's line, as in ch. xxiii. 5.

16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, † The LORD our righteousness.

† Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu.*

17 ¶ For thus saith the LORD; † David shall never [f] want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

† Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

[f] 2 Sam. 7. 16. 1 Kin. 2. 4.

18 Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

19 ¶ And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying,

[g] Isai. 54. 9. chap. 31. 36.

20 Thus saith the LORD; [g] If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season;

21 *Then* may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

22 As [h] the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

[h] chap. 31. 37.

23 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

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16. *wherewith she shall be called*] When the good word was spoken, the name Jehovah our Righteousness was given to the righteous Sprout: here it is given to Jerusalem, *i.e.* to the Church, because it is her business mediately to work on earth that righteousness which Christ works absolutely. The Church justifies men only because its ordinances bring men to Christ. Cp. Eph. i. 23.

17, 18. Read literally, these two verses promise the permanent restoration of the Davidic throne and of the Levitical priesthood. As a matter of fact Zedekiah was the last king of David's line, and though after the exile the Levitical priesthood attained for a time to great power, yet it too has long passed away for ever. And both these changes Jeremiah himself foretold, the failure of David's kingdom in ch. xxii. 30, xxx. 21; that of the Levitical priesthood in ch. iii. 16, xxxi. 33. In what way then is this apparent contradiction to be explained? The question is the more important because the difficulty often arises, cp. Isai. lxvi. 20, 23; Ezek. xl.—xlviii. The solution is probably as follows. It was necessary that the Bible should be intelligible to the people at the time when it was written, and in some degree to the writer. Neither writer nor reader need know the whole meaning, but it must have some meaning to them. But language can never rise above the ideas of the time: for words are merely symbols, taken at first from external objects, but gradually elevated and made fit to express mental emotions and spiritual conceptions. The Jew therefore could use only such symbols as he possessed, and in describing the perfectness of the Christian Church was compelled to represent it as the state of things under which he lived freed from all imperfections. So we can form no idea of the Deity except as a man freed from all human weakness. So St John in describing the new Jerusalem speaks of gold and jewellery, glass and crystal, rainbows, rivers, and fruitful trees, only to suggest the idea of marvellous beauty. "Transparent gold," Rev. xxi. 21, is an impossibility, though not more so than a lion eating straw, Isai. xi. 7; but the one conveys the idea of something beautiful as glass and precious as gold, while the other is the symbol of savage natures changed to love and gentleness. So here; the Davidic kingship and the Levitical priesthood are symbols, which represented to the Jew all that was most dear to his heart in the state of things under which he lived: his national existence and freedom from foreign oppression was bound up with the one; his religious hopes with the other. Their restoration was the restoration of his national and spiritual life. Neither was so restored as to exist permanently. But that was given instead, of which both were types, the Church, whose Head is the true Prophet, Priest and King.

19—22. The unchangeableness of God's laws in nature is the pledge that His promises in grace are equally immutable, cp. ch. xxxi. 35—37. The throne of David therefore must continue, for so had the prophet spoken, 2 S. vii. 12—16; and though no promise of perpetuity had been given to the priesthood as a whole, such a promise had been given to Phinehas personally, Num. xxv. 13, and moreover the perpetuity of David's throne implied that of the accessory institutions. This promise also has been not literally, but spiritually fulfilled; for in this sense only have the seed of David and the Levites been multiplied. As regards the spiritual fulfilment we find in Isai. lxvi. 21 the promise that the Gentiles shall become priests and Levites.

24 Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

25 Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant *be* not with day and night, *and if* I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;

26 Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, *so* that I will not take *any* of his seed *to be* rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

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24. *Considerest thou not*] Lit. **Hast thou not seen**, *i.e.* noticed? an idiom common in most languages, but see Ezek. viii. 12, 15, 17.

this people] *i.e.* the Jews. The word *people* is not applied to the Gentiles.

The two families] Probably Israel and Judah: some take it, less correctly, of the seed of Jacob, to whom the birthright was first given, and the seed of David to whom subsequently the promise was confined, that the Messiah should spring from them.

thus...that they should be...] Or, **and** *My people they have despised* **so that they are** *no more a nation before them, i.e.* in their sight. In their despair at seeing the capture of the city inevitable, they become callous, and say that God has now rejected Judah as well as Israel: and thus they despise themselves in their relation to God as His covenant-people, by regarding their national existence as about immediately to cease for ever.

25. *the ordinances of heaven and earth*] *i.e.* the whole order of nature. The appeal is as before, viz., that nature is not more firmly established than God's purposes in grace.

26. *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*] Jehovah is so constantly described as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, that the mention of these three patriarchs certifies the people that the promises made to their seed cannot be broken.

NOTES on CHAP. XXXIII. 5, 14—26.

5. Ewald unites בֹּאִים with the last word of *v.* 4, and reads there הַחֲרָבִים, but the pl. of חרב, *a sword*, is חרבות. Movers would strike out בֹּאִים, imagining that it has strayed away from ch. xxxi. 38. It certainly is needed there, and its absence here would make everything plain and easy; but the distance is too great for the dislocation to be probable. C. B. Michaelis takes it grammatically, supposing that the houses by being taken down and used as fortifications might be said to fight against the Chaldæans, but the next clause becomes then unintelligible. Venema and others translate *Venientibus ad oppugnandum Chaldæis*, but the אֵת proves that the Chaldæans are the object of attack. Nägelsb. virtually acknowledges the untenableness of his own suggestion that instead of *the Chaldees*, we should read *against Jerusalem*. The only remedy is the omission of בֹּאִים, but, as we have said above, there is nothing to justify it except necessity.

14—26. This passage is wanting in the LXX., and partly for this reason, and partly because it contains promises of the eternal duration of David's throne, and of the Levitical priesthood, and also of the numerical increase of David's seed and of the Levites at variance with other prophecies of Jeremiah, and not literally fulfilled, J. D. Michaelis, Jahn, Hitz., and to some extent Movers regard the passage as a series of interpolations. Graf however has shewn that these objections have little weight, and Ewald ('Proph. des A. Bundes,' II. 269) says "Nothing is so perverse and groundless as to find in this passage, ch. xxxiii. 19—26, or, generally, in chaps. xxx.—xxxiii. additions by a later prophet."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 *Jeremiah prophesieth the captivity of Zedekiah and the city.* 8 *The princes and the people having dismissed their bondservants, contrary to the covenant of God, reassume them.* 12 *Jeremiah, for their disobedience, giveth them and Zedekiah into the hands of their enemies.*

JEREMIAH'S EIGHTEENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. xxxiv. 1—7.

The fate of Zedekiah, and Jeremiah's rebuke of the people for breaking faith with their slaves.

The ordinary view of this prophecy is that of Ewald, that it is a more full account of the narrative already given in ch. xxxii. 3—5, and that it by no means promises a continuance of Zedekiah's reign, and at his death the pomp of obsequies such as became a king, but merely that his life would be spared by Nebu-

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, [a] when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth [†] of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire:

3 And thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be [b] taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and [†] he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.

4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword:

[a] 2 Kin. 25. 1, &c. chap. 52. 4.

[†] Heb. *the dominion of his hand.*

[b] chap. 32. 4.

[†] Heb. *his mouth shall speak to thy mouth.*

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chadnezzar, and that he would live in peace at Babylon, and at his death be buried there with such honours as the Jews could afford. Really, Zedekiah had no such peaceful end. After his sons and nobles had been slain before his face, he was deprived of his sight, dragged to Babylon in chains, and there cast into prison where he remained till his death, ch. lii. 10, 11. And when we call to mind the cruel treatment which the youthful Jehoiachin met with for no fault of his own, we cannot imagine that Nebuchadnezzar would be kind to Zedekiah, who, after being elevated by him to the throne, had proved ungrateful and rebelled against his benefactor. More probably the prophecy set before the king an alternative, and was conditional upon his submission to the prophet's advice. Jeremiah had always consistently endeavoured to persuade Zedekiah, first of all, to be faithful to Nebuchadnezzar, and when evil counsellors had caused him to rebel, he then did his best to get him to submit, and surrender the city voluntarily. At the very beginning then of the invasion,—for Jeremiah was still free; the command *go and speak*, *v.* 2, implies that his personal liberty had not been as yet interfered with; and next, Lachish and Azekah were neither of them captured—early then in the invasion he goes to the king, and sets before him what was still a possibility. This prophecy therefore must be taken in close connection with ch. xxi. Jeremiah had then informed Zedekiah by his messengers that Jerusalem would certainly be captured: soon afterwards he goes to him in person, and makes his last effort to save city and temple from ruin. Nor was the attempt hopeless. Lachish and Azekah were strong cities in the plain toward Egypt, and must be taken before the Chaldees could march upon Jerusalem, as otherwise an Egyptian army might collect under their cover, and fall suddenly upon them. Thus Sennacherib had to capture Lachish before operations were possible against Jerusalem. Now Nebuchadnezzar had large plans against Egypt, Tyre, and other nations, and also for the rebuilding of Babylon: he would gladly therefore have saved himself the trouble of turning aside to lay siege to a city so strong as Jerusalem, but otherwise of no political importance. Zedekiah therefore was still in a condition to obtain good terms, and the prophet goes to him and lays before him the alternative. In the memorandum, which is all we possess, Jeremiah first states, in *vv.* 2, 3, what is to happen if Zedekiah obstinately continues the war: in *vv.* 4, 5, there is the other alternative, to be attained to only by submission. Zedekiah with all the obstinacy of a weak man chose the former, and lost kingdom, eyesight and liberty.

CHAP. XXXIV. 1. *people*] **Peoples**, *i.e.* tribes, races, several of which might be under the rule of one man, and so form one kingdom. This verbose description well suits the pomp of an oriental army; and also describes the fact, that such an army consisted of a loose aggregate of tributary and half-conquered nations and tribes, held together by the personal influence of one man.

fought] Lit. *and Nebuchadnezzar...and all the* **peoples** *are fighting*. The war has only just begun, and at present *the cities* of Judah are being captured preparatory to the siege of Jerusalem. At such a conjuncture the king and his officers would deliberate whether they should determine to stand a siege or submit. See Luke xiv. 31, 32.

2. *he shall burn it with fire*] A proof of the exasperation of Nebuchadnezzar's mind, and suggestive therefore of the hard fate likely to befal Zedekiah.

3. *thine eyes...*] There shall be no escape, but face to face he must see the conqueror, must make such excuses as he best can, and be taken to Babylon. The worst is concealed, but the king is warned that his resistance will be wholly unavailing.

4. *Thou shalt not die by the sword*] In neither case was it to be Zedekiah's lot to fall in battle, but this implies more, viz. that in

5 *But* thou shalt die in peace: and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they burn *odours* for thee; and they will lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD.

6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem,

7 When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

8 ¶ *This is* the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which

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case of submission he, his land and his people, would be delivered from the ravages of war.

5. *in peace*] See note on ch. xii. 12.

so shall they burn odours *for thee*] *So shall they* **make a burning** *for thee*, 2 Chro. xvi. 14, xxi. 19. The burning was probably that of piles of wood, and spices were added only as an especial honour. It was not a Jewish custom to burn the dead. As these burnings depended upon the estimation in which the dead king was held, the verse implies a prosperous reign, such as Zedekiah might have had as an obedient vassal to Babylon.

I have pronounced the word] *I have* **spoken** *the word.*

7. *against Lachish...*] This marks the exact time, that it was early in the campaign, while the outlying fortresses still occupied the attention of Nebuchadnezzar's army.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE HEBREW SLAVES.

Chap. xxxiv. 8—22.

According to the Levitical law, if a man purchased a slave of Hebrew blood, after six years' service he was to set him free, Exod. xxi. 2; and this humane treatment was extended in Deut. xv. 12 to females, whose purchase is contemplated in the earlier law only for the purpose of marriage, Exod. xxi. 7—11, when of course they remained with their master and husband for life. In Lev. xxv. 39—55, we find a completely different law, by which a Hebrew when purchased was not to be treated as a slave, but as a hired servant, and his bondage was to last till the year of jubile. But this law referred to the owner of one of the plots of ground into which the land was parcelled out. If he fell into poverty he could sell his land up to the year of jubile, and also the services of himself and family, who remained as predial serfs, tilling the land which had once been their own, and which at the year of jubile would be restored to them with their own freedom. But with this the present narrative has nothing to do; for it relates to domestic and not to predial slavery. Parents could sell their children, Exod. xxi. 7, Neh. v. 5, and those in poverty could sell themselves, but in each case only for six years. They had not to wait for a sabbatical year, still less for a year of jubile, but after six years' service might leave their owners, carrying with them liberal gifts, Deut. xv. 14.

Now it is usual with commentators to say that these laws, as also that of the land resting during the sabbatical year, were not observed. The narrative teaches us the exact contrary. The manumission of the slaves on the present occasion was the spontaneous act of Zedekiah and the people. What was it that induced them to act thus? Not Jeremiah's persuasion;—we do not read of any exhortation on his part to this effect;—but their own consciences, so that plainly they knew of the law, and acknowledged its obligation. But this would scarcely have been possible unless there had been strict Jews who regularly practised it. The observance of it was lax: the majority let their own selfish interests prevail; but the minority made might give way to right. And this is the rule with all God's laws. They are evaded, and where the national tone of morality is low, may seem almost to have gone into desuetude. In such cases it is the duty of the minority to endeavour to rouse the national conscience to a more strict observance of a duty acknowledged by them only in words. There was such a minority in Jerusalem, and Zedekiah, who evidently was not uninfluenced by the remembrance of his father, supported their efforts to keep the law more strictly, though only in a weak way.

The circumstances were as follow: early in January, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, the Chaldæan army approached Jerusalem. As usual, the presence of danger quickened the consciences of the people, and they made a covenant with the king, who thus appears as the abettor of the measure, to let their slaves go free. Possibly patriotism had its share in bringing about this good result: and as Jerusalem was strongly fortified, and evidently prepared for a siege, all classes possibly hoped for a happy result; and if the slaves were manumitted, they too would labour with a

[c] Exod. 21. 2. *were* at Jerusalem, to proclaim [c] liberty unto them;

9 That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, *being* an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother.

10 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let *them* go.

11 But afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.

12 ¶ Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying,

14 At the end of [d] seven years let ye go every man his brother an

[d] Exod. 21. 2. Deut. 15. 12.

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more hearty good-will in resisting the enemy. In the summer of the same year the Egyptians advanced to the rescue, and Nebuchadnezzar withdrew to meet their attack. The Jews were evidently elated beyond measure, and with a strange levity, which sets them before us in a most despicable light, they at once forced the manumitted slaves back into bondage. With noble indignation Jeremiah rebukes them for their treachery, assures them that the Chaldæan army will return, and warns them of the certainty of the punishment which they so richly merited.

It is unnecessary to enquire with Hitzig whether or not this was a sabbatical year, as the two enactments were entirely independent of one another.

8. *all the people which* were *at Jerusalem*] As the Chaldæan army swept over the country the wealthier classes would all flee to Jerusalem, taking with them their households. As the head-quarters of the priests and Levites the Mosaic law was probably more carefully kept there than in the country, and thus the presence in these families of slaves who had grown gray in service may have given offence to the stricter classes at the capital.

to proclaim liberty unto them] See Lev. xxv. 10, and note on Isai. lxi. 1. The words are those of the proclamation of the year of jubile, and thus the words *unto them* are quite right. A proclamation of liberty was to be made to the people, whereupon it became their duty to set their slaves free.

9. *should serve himself of them*] Should make them serve him, see ch. xxv. 14.

10. *Now when all the princes...heard*] **Obeyed.** It is the same verb that is rendered *obeyed* at the end of the verse. Lit. it means *to hear*, but it is part of the courtesy of oriental countries to represent obedience as the necessary result of hearing another's wishes. The whole verse should be translated, *And (obeyed) all the princes and all the people who had entered into the covenant to set free every one his manservant, and every one his maidservant, and not to make use of them as slaves any more, (and they) obeyed and set them free.* But as it is not our English idiom to repeat the verb at the beginning and end, the words in brackets should be omitted, though found in the Hebr.

11. *they turned, and caused...to return*] *But afterward they* **again** *made the slaves return.* See note on ch. xii. 15.

brought them into subjection] Lit. *they caused to bring them into subjection.* This suggests the possibility of the more powerful princes having combined to force this measure upon all: but the causal mood may only intensify the meaning.

13. *the house of bondmen*] Kindness to those in service was the more obligatory upon the Jews as growing out of their own history, Deut. xv. 15. *House of bondmen* is not a mere generalization, but means the miserable prison in which, after being worked in the fields all day in gangs, the slaves for safe custody were shut up at night.

14. *At the end of seven years*] This in our phrase means at the end of six years. So the jubile was called by the Jews the fiftieth year, but really was the forty-ninth, being the seventh sabbatical year. So we read, "When eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child," Luke ii. 21, though the circumcision took place on the day week after the birth, so that if a child were born in the afternoon it would not be quite seven days old. So our Lord rose again "after three days" (Mark viii. 31), though the actual time that He lay in the grave, was not much more than thirty hours.

‖ Or, *hath sold himself.*

Hebrew, which ‖ hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear.

† Heb. *to day.*

15 And ye were † now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house † which is called by my name:

† Heb. *whereupon my name is called.*

16 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

17 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you † to be [e] removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

† Heb. *for a removing.*

[e] Deut. 28. 64. chap. 29. 18.

18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,

19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;

20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their [f] dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.

[f] chap. 7. 33. & 16. 4.

21 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you.

22 Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

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hearkened not] *Obeyed not.* This does not imply that the law had not been kept by the more pious part of the nation. Where there is no regular administration of justice, the observance of the law becomes very lax.

15. *And ye were now turned*] The *ye* is emphatic. The word rendered *were turned* is exactly the same as that for *ye turned* in *v.* 16. On its double meaning, see note on ch. viii. 4.

16. *at their pleasure*] Lit. *for themselves.* So in Deut. xxi. 14, *for herself* is rendered *whither she will.*

brought them into subjection] Not the intensive form used in *v.* 11, where see note.

17. *I proclaim a liberty for you*] The thought is the same as in ch. ii. 14. Deprived of the care and protection of God their lord and owner, the Jews become the hopeless prey of their enemies.

I will make you to be removed into] *I will cause you to be* **a terror unto.** See note on ch. xv. 4. By being a terror is not meant that they would inspire fear, but that men would shudder at them. c o

18. *the words of the covenant...when they cut the calf in twain*] The construction of this verse is much disputed. The most tenable takes *calf* as standing in apposition to covenant, *the words of the covenant which they cut before me, even of the calf which they cut in twain.* The Jews spoke of cutting a covenant, because the contracting parties cut a calf in twain and passed between the pieces, cp. Gen. xv. 10. Thus *cutting a covenant* and *cutting a calf in twain*, meant the same thing.

19. *The princes...*] In this enumeration of the parties to the covenant we find the princes of Judah, the territorial magnates, standing before the princes of Jerusalem, *i.e.* the elders of the city; while eunuchs take precedence of priests. In ch. xxix. 2 they are mentioned before the princes, a proof of the effeminacy of the court.

21. *which are gone up from you*] Which have departed for the present, and raised the siege. Cp. ch. xxi. 2.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1 *By the obedience of the Rechabites,* 12 *Jeremiah condemneth the disobedience of the Jews.* 18 *God blesseth the Rechabites for their obedience.*

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

2 Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites;

4 And I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes,

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JEREMIAH'S NINETEENTH PROPHECY.

Chap. XXXV.

The Rechabites.

The Rechabites were a nomad tribe, not of Jewish, but of Kenite race, 1 Chro. ii. 55, and connected with the Amalekites, Num. xxiv. 21; 1 S. xv. 6, from whom however they had separated themselves, and made a close alliance with the tribe of Judah, Judg. i. 16, on whose southern borders they took up their dwelling, 1 S. xxvii. 10. While, however, the main body of the Kenites gradually adopted settled habits, and dwelt in cities, 1 S. xxx. 29, the Rechabites persisted in leading the free desert life, and in this determination they were finally confirmed by the influence and authority of Jonadab, a remarkable man of their tribe who lived in Jehu's reign, two centuries and a half before the present occurrence. From the part he then took in helping Jehu to root out the worship of Baal, it seems plain that he was a zealous adherent of Jehovah, 2 K. x. 15—17, and possibly from the lasting nature of his influence he was a religious reformer; and as the names of the men mentioned in the present narrative are all compounded with Jah, the form which Jehovah takes at the end of a word, it is plain that the tribe continued their allegiance to Him.

The object of Jonadab in endeavouring to preserve the nomad habits of his race was probably twofold. He wished first to maintain among them the purer morality and higher feeling of the desert contrasted with the laxity and effeminacy of the city life; and secondly he was anxious for the preservation of their freedom. A tribe of wanderers in the open desert is very much out of the reach of danger. Their presence now in Jerusalem, to escape from the general insecurity that followed upon the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, shews how men may keep the letter while they violate the purpose of a command. Their punctilious obedience however to Jonadab's precepts is employed by Jeremiah to point a useful lesson for his own people. We can quite imagine that their black tents pitched in the open places of Jerusalem had attracted no slight degree of attention: and while all men were talking of them the prophet invited them to the temple, and brought out into clear relief their steady obedience to their ancestor's command.

The date of the prophecy is the interval between the battle of Carchemish and the appearance of Nebuchadnezzar at Jerusalem, *v.* 11, at the end of the same year. It is consequently seventeen years earlier than the preceding narrative of the manumission of the slaves.

2. *the house of the Rechabites*] Not the dwelling, for they lived in tents, but the family, cp. Gen. vii. 1; Exod. ii. 1; 1 Chro. ii. 55.

3. Jaazaniah was apparently the chief of the tribe, or possibly of that small portion of it which had taken refuge in Jerusalem. The city would not have afforded space enough for the cattle which formed the wealth of the main body of the Rechabites.

4. *the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God*] By the rules of the Hebr. language the title *man of God, i.e.* prophet, belongs to Hanan, whom, on this account, many have identified with the Hanani mentioned in 2 Chro. xvi. 7, xix. 2. His father's name Igdaliah, in Hebr. *Yigdalyahu*, is the full form of that with which we are more familiar in the contracted form Gedaliah. *The sons of Hanan* are probably not his lineal descendants, but his disciples, and it shews us how little we really know of the state of things at Jerusalem, when thus we find a religious school or sect, regularly established in the precincts of the temple, of whose views and modes of interpretation we know nothing, and whose founder is to us a mere shadow. Plainly however the Hananites were friendly to Jeremiah, and lent him their hall for his purpose.

the chamber of the princes] Probably the council-chamber in which the great officers of

which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the † door:

† Heb. *threshold*, or, *vessel*.

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither* ye, nor your sons for ever:

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any:* but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD.

14 The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink

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state, ch. xxvi. 10, met for the despatch of business.

the keeper of the door] Lit. *threshold*, really the vestibule. There were three of these keepers, answering to the outer and inner courts of the temple, and the entrance to the temple itself. From ch. lii. 24 it appears that they were officers of high rank, having precedence next to the high-priest and his deputy, and as such we find them entrusted with the money for the repair of the temple, 2 K. xii. 9.

5. *pots*] **bowls**, out of which the cups were filled. Except in the description of the candlesticks, Exod. xxv. 31, 33, the word is only used elsewhere of Joseph's divining bowl, Gen. xliv. 2.

6, 7. *Ye shall drink no wine*] Wine is the symbol of a settled life, because the vine requires time for its growth and care in its cultivation, while the preparation of the wine itself requires buildings, and it then has to be stored up before it is ready for use. The drink of nomads consists of the milk of their herds. Diodorus Sic., XIX. 94, tells us that the Nabathæans, for the preservation of their wandering habits, and thereby of their liberty, forbade any one "either to sow corn or plant fruit trees, or drink wine, or build a house."

7. *strangers*] Because not of Jewish blood, though wandering in their territory. We find however nomads using wine, Gen. xxvii. 25, and even sowing corn, ib. xxvi. 12, as it was possible to buy the one, and to break up the encampment after reaping the other.

8, 10. *our father*] Not merely our ancestor, but the founder of our institutions, Judg. xvii. 10; 2 K. vi. 21.

11. *the Syrians*] Many critics follow the LXX. in substituting Assyrians for Syrians, but the names are not alike in the Hebr. as that for Syrians is *Aram*. It was not so much perhaps the Chaldæans, *i.e.* the regular army of Nebuchadnezzar, who drove the Rechabites into Jerusalem, as marauding bands of the Aramæans. Similarly we find afterwards when Jehoiakim rebelled that the Syrians at once began to carry on a predatory war, 2 K. xxiv. 2.

13. *Go and tell*] *Go and* **say to**... This admonition was not spoken in the hall of the Hananites, but Jeremiah accompanied, as it seems, by the main body of the Rechabites, *vv.* 18, 19, went into one of the courts of the temple, and there addressed to the people the rebuke of which we have the summary in the following verses.

14. *are performed*] *Are* **established**, *i.e.* are maintained in full force.

unto this day] *i.e.* for more than two hundred years.

none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me.

15 I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*, saying, [a] Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

[a] chap. 18. 11. & 25. 5.

16 Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me:

17 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

18 ¶ And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; [†] Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

[†] Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off from Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand, &c.*

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Jeremiah causeth Baruch to write his prophecy,* 5 *and publickly to read it.* 11 *The princes, having intelligence thereof by Michaiah, send Jehudi to fetch the roll, and read it.* 19 *They will Baruch to hide himself and Jeremiah.* 20 *The king Jehoiakim, being certified thereof, heareth part of it, and burneth the roll.* 27 *Jeremiah denounceth his judgment.* 32 *Baruch writeth a new copy.*

AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word

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15. *all my servants the prophets*] The Rechabites had had but one lawgiver: the Jews had had a succession of messengers accredited unto them by God. Cp. Matt. xxi. 34—37.

16. *Because...*] **Inasmuch as.** The obedience of the Rechabites was not the cause of Judah's punishment, though the contrast brought out her disobedience into clearer light.

have performed] *Have* **established**, see *v.* 14.

19. *a man to stand before me*] *i.e.* the Rechabites shall always have one of their tribe ministering before me, and able therefore to take care of their interests: see note on ch. xv. 19. Stripped of the metaphor it means that their welfare should ever be the object of the divine care, and accordingly Dr Wolff and Signor Pierotti bear witness to the existence of a large tribe who represent themselves as the descendants of the Rechabites (Smith's 'Bib. Dict.' under *Rechabites*). The writer of the article, Professor Plumptre, shews moreover that the prediction was also literally fulfilled in the Rechabites being in some way incorporated into the tribe of Levi, whose office especially it was to *stand before* Jehovah, Deut. x. 8.

CHAPS. XXXVI.—XLIV.

HISTORICAL EVENTS connected with the collection of Jeremiah's prophecies into a volume, and with his personal history immediately before and after the siege of Jerusalem.

The burning of the Roll.

CHAP. XXXVI. We have now reached the end of the prophecies relating to Israel and Judah, and find very fittingly attached to them an account of the circumstances under which very many of them, and also the prophecies concerning the Gentiles, were first formed into one volume. For the main particulars connected with this most important event, see Introd. pp. 320, 321, 323.

1. *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim*] See note on ch. xxv. 1. As regards the comparative date of these two chapters, it seems to have been in the earlier part of the fourth year of Jehoiakim that Jeremiah foretold the vast extent of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, and the seventy years' duration of the Jewish exile, as narrated to us in ch. xxv. The present chapter containing the history of the roll belongs to the very end of that year, for it was not till the ninth month of the fifth year that

came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of [a] Josiah, even unto this day.

[a] chap. 25. 3.

3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

5 And Jeremiah commanded Ba-

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it was read in the ears of the people, *v.* 9. Slow as was the task of writing in those days, still the nine months of Jehoiakim's fifth year must have sufficed for the task, even taking into consideration that besides the work of selecting and arranging those portions of the prophet's writings, which were deemed worthy of being included in the roll, there was also the actual composition of a great part of the prophecies concerning the Gentile nations. Now as we have seen in ch. xxv. 1 by comparison of that passage with Dan. i. 1, the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar took place in the thirty-second month of Jehoiakim's reign, and therefore early in his fourth year. Whether before or after the publication of ch. xxv. we have no means of deciding, but probably before, and certainly long before the writing of Jehoiakim's roll. It must be remembered, however, that what Jerusalem then suffered was a very transient misfortune. Nebuchadnezzar had no cause of ill-will against Jehoiakim except his being a vassal to Pharaoh-Necho; while, on the other hand, he would bear in mind that Jehoiakim's father had lost his life in fighting against the Egyptians. He was also in great haste, and anxious to secure the throne of Babylon. Thus he contented himself with carrying off a few prisoners and part of the treasures of the temple, Dan. i. 1, 2, and with compelling the king to become his vassal. But the humiliation seems to have sunk deeply into the heart of Jehoiakim, and when Jeremiah prophesied wide extended dominion to the Chaldees, and that "the king of Babylon would again come to destroy the land, and make man and beast to cease from it," *v.* 29, his anger knew no bounds. It was the fact that judgment had begun which made it expedient to gather Jeremiah's predictions into one volume, with the object (1) of inducing the people to repent, and (2) of persuading the king to be a true subject of the Chaldæan empire.

2. *a roll of a book*] Not a tablet, as in Isai. viii. 1, where see note, but a parchment-roll, consisting of several skins sewn together, and cut of an even breadth, with a piece of wood at one end, or in case of larger volumes at both ends, on which to roll them up. On this the writing was arranged in columns, and the place was found by unrolling the volume, a word which means the same as roll, though we apply it to books shaped in a very different way. The Hebrew word for *book* literally means *writing*, and so *a roll of a book* means *a roll prepared for writing, a writing-roll.*

write therein all the words that...] Not from memory, as Graf, Keil, Nägelsb., and others think, but from written records preserved by the prophet of his predictions. Cp. Isai. viii. 1, 16, xxx. 8; Jer. xxii. 30, xxx. 2; Hab. ii. 2. The prophets were a learned class, and from the time when Samuel founded his schools, had been the great promoters of literature among the people. This conclusion, however, does not rest upon general views, but is proved by the nature of the earlier chapters of this book. They are not a mere summary, fashioning into a connected whole the main lessons of Jeremiah's teaching, but are fragmentary, and full of passages standing out in bold relief, forming doubtless but a very small portion of his discourses (cp. John xxi. 25), but preserving those truths which had been more directly given him by inspiration, and which therefore formed the text as it were of his sermons. Nor is this contradicted by the phrase, *all the words*; for in *v.* 32 we are told that Baruch added to them in the second roll *many like* words. The phrase means that the roll was to contain "the whole counsel of God" (Acts xx. 27) upon the special point mentioned in *v.* 3, and that the prophet was not to keep anything back.

3. *It may be...*] This verse is almost identical with ch. xxvi. 3, and seems to shew that Jeremiah had still a strong hope that the nation would repent. Perhaps this confidence was founded upon the appearance of Nebuchadnezzar and his army at Jerusalem, whereby a sharp shock was given to the overweening confidence of the Jews. In point of date ch. xxvi. is immediately prior to the present.

4. *Baruch wrote*] Writing or engrossing upon parchment was a difficult art, and one in high repute, as we see by a man so nobly born as Baruch making it his profession,

ruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD:

6 Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities.

† Heb. *their supplication shall fall.*

7 It may be † they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people.

8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

9 And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem.

10 Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the ‖ *b* entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in the ears of all the people.

‖ Or, *door.* *b* chap. 26. 10.

11 ¶ When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD,

12 Then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there,

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6. *I* am *shut up*] **Hindered**, prevented from going; so in 1 S. xxi. 5 it is translated *kept*, *i.e.* kept away by circumstances. The rendering *shut up* is taken from chs. xxxiii. 1, xxxix. 15, where it means *imprisoned*, but it is plain from *v.* 19 that Jeremiah was not now in custody. What hindered him we cannot tell: perhaps fear of Jehoiakim.

6. *the fasting day*] **A** *fasting day.* Baruch was to wait for a proper opportunity, which the king soon gave him, *v.* 9.

7. *they will present their supplication*] Lit. *it may be their supplication will fall before Jehovah.* As this was the attitude of suppliants, their prayer is also supposed to enter the presence of the Deity in the same humble guise. It appears, however, from a comparison with chs. xxxvii. 20, xlii. 2, that the phrase also contained the idea of the prayer being accepted.

8. *reading*] **To read.** Baruch had not yet read it, but prepared it for reading.

9. *they proclaimed a fast*] As the ordinary fast was in the seventh month, Lev. xvi. 29, xxiii. 27, this must have been one appointed for some special purpose, and with this agrees the word *proclaimed*, cp. 1 K. xxi. 9, 12; Ezra viii. 21, &c. The ninth month answers to our December, and Keil is probably right in supposing that the fast was in commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans in the previous year. No such fast was observed during the exile, Zech. viii. 19.

10. *in the chamber of Gemariah...the scribe*] Gemariah seems to have inherited his father's office of public scribe or secretary of state, see 2 K. xxii. 3. As brother of Ahikam, he would be favourable to Jeremiah, and as secretary he would have a spacious apartment, which from its position seems to have been that in which Jeremiah had been tried for his life, ch. xxvi. 10.

the higher court] *The inner court*, see note on ch. vii. 2. Into this court it was not lawful for the people to enter, but the chamber probably itself formed one of its sides, and could be approached from the outer court; and either Baruch read the roll from the entrance to the people standing in the court below, or the room was sufficiently spacious to admit all who chose to enter.

in the ears of all the people] *i.e.* the reading was public, not before a select audience, but all were invited to be present.

11. *Michaiah the son of Gemariah*] Gemariah himself had not been present at the reading, being engaged at a meeting of the princes at the palace, *v.* 12, but his son hastens to tell him of it. It is a complete mistake to suppose with Umbreit that he had any bad intention in so doing. More probably as his father had lent Jeremiah the hall, Michaiah had been commanded to bring Gemariah tidings, as soon as the reading was over, of the nature of the prophet's words, and the effect produced by them upon the people.

12. *he went down*] See chs. xxii. 1, xxvi. 10.

the scribe's chamber] The chancery in which

even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes.

13 Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people.

14 Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them.

15 And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears.

16 Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words.

17 And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth?

18 Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book.

19 Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.

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the king's business was conducted. From *v.* 20 it appears to have been in the forecourt of the palace.

Elishama the scribe] Hitzig suggests that he may have been the "principal scribe of the host," ch. lii. 25, *i.e.* the secretary of state for war. If so, the business which had brought together "all the princes" would have reference to the Chaldæan war.

Elnathan the son of Achbor] See ch. xxvi. 22.

14. *Jehudi...Cushi*] As Jehudi signifies a Jew and Cushi an Ethiopian, Hitzig sees here an exemplification of the law in Deut. xxiii. 8. Cushi he supposes to have been a proselyte, whose descendant becomes a full Jew in the third generation. But (1) the names of the father, Nethaniah = *Jehovah is the giver* = Theodore, and the grandfather, Shelemiah = *Jehovah requiteth*, shew no signs of Ethiopian extraction; and (2) Cushi appears elsewhere as a proper name, Zeph. i. 1 and probably 2 S. xviii. 21, and apparently meant only a person of dark complexion. So too as we find even a Hittite woman called Judith, Gen. xxvi. 34, it is more reasonable to conclude that Jehudi also is a genuine proper name.

15. *Sit down*] The honourable treatment which Baruch meets with shews that the princes were favourably inclined towards him and Jeremiah. Cp. *v.* 19.

16. *they were afraid both one and other*] Lit. *they trembled each to his neighbour*, *i.e.* they shewed their alarm by their looks and gestures one to another. The princes all knew the general tenor of Jeremiah's predictions, but they gained fresh force when thus brought together. Their fear therefore was not on Jeremiah's account, but because they felt that what he had so consistently prophesied for a period of twenty-three years would in all probability be fulfilled.

We will surely tell] Rather, **We must tell** *the king*. Jeremiah's words were of great political importance, and it was their official duty to make the king acquainted with them.

17. *they asked Baruch*] Before reporting the matter to the king it was their duty to learn what were the exact relations of Baruch and Jeremiah. The roll might have been drawn up by Baruch from memoranda of his own without the prophet's direct authority. The princes therefore did not ask from curiosity, but to obtain necessary information.

at his mouth] Lit. **from** *his mouth*. These words are not in the LXX., and are regarded by Ewald and other critics as an interpolation from the next verse. They need, however, mean nothing more than that Jeremiah had spoken the words.

18. *He pronounced*] **He used to say aloud**, or, in our phrase, *he dictated*. The imperfect tense shews that the composition of the roll occupied a considerable time.

with his mouth] **From** *his mouth*. See above.

with ink] As if to mark, says Abravanel, that Baruch's office was merely mechanical. He contributed nothing but hand, pen, and ink.

19. *Go, hide thee*] The princes, whose friendly feelings towards Jeremiah we have seen in ch. xxvi. 16, before reporting the matter to the king were anxious to provide for the prophet's safety, well knowing what effect so bold a proceeding on his part would be likely

20 ¶ And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

21 So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him.

23 And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

25 Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son ‖ of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them. ‖ Or, *of the king.*

27 ¶ Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,

28 Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

29 And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written there-

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to have upon the mind of so jealous a tyrant as Jehoiakim.

20. *into the court*] *i.e.* the inner quadrangle of the palace, in which the royal residence was actually situated.

they laid up the roll] **They left** *the roll* **in charge**, *i.e.* gave it to some one to take care of, cp. Isai. x. 28; Jer. xxxvii. 21, xl. 7. It is the verb used in ch. i. 10, where see note.

21. *which stood beside the king*] **Above** *the king*. The king sate, the courtiers stood, cp. ch. xxxv. 19; 2 Chro. xxiv. 20. So in the synagogue the preacher sate, the hearers stood; Luke iv. 20.

22. *the winterhouse*] From Amos iii. 15 it appears that a separate portion of the palace was used for residence according to the season. The ninth month was December, see on *v.* 9.

and there was a fire *on the hearth...*] *And* **the fire-pan** *burning before them.* Hearths are entirely unknown in the East, but on the middle of the floor was a brazier containing burning charcoal.

23. *three or four leaves*] *Columns.* The Hebrew word lit. signifies folding-doors, and exactly describes the shape of the columns of writing upon the roll.

penknife] *Scribe's knife.* Its use was to shape the reed employed for writing, and to make erasures in the parchment.

the fire that was *on the hearth*] *The fire that was* **in the fire-pan.** The conduct of the king plainly shews how violent and impetuous was his temper. He can scarcely endure the reading of three or four columns, and then angrily seizing the roll he cuts it into pieces with his own hand, parchment not being easily torn, and tosses it into the brazier.

24. *they were not afraid*] Contrast with this Josiah's conduct, 2 K. xxii. 11.

his servants] Not the princes, as Ewald supposes, but the king's attendants. For the princes see *v.* 16.

25. *made intercession*] Evidently therefore there were men who would have zealously aided the king in following in his father's steps, had he been inclined so to do. We learn the same from the two baskets of figs in ch. xxiv. 1. It is the more remarkable to find Elnathan thus interceding after the office he had discharged in ch. xxvi. 22.

26. *Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech*] Or, *the son of the king* (marg.). Hitz., Graf, Nägelsb., Keil, &c., accept this rendering, understanding thereby not a son of Jehoiakim, but a prince of the blood royal, cp. ch. xxxviii. 6; 1 K. xxii. 26. It is equally probable that it is a proper name.

in, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast?

30 Therefore thus saith the LORD of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be
c chap. 22. 19. c cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

† Heb. visit upon. 31 And I will † punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

32 ¶ Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto
† Heb. as they. them many † like words.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 The Egyptians having raised the siege of the Chaldeans, king Zedekiah sendeth to Jeremiah to pray for the people. 6 Jeremiah prophesieth the Chaldeans' certain return and victory. 11 He is taken for a fugitive, beaten, and put in prison. 16 He assureth Zedekiah of the captivity. 18 Intreating for his liberty, he obtaineth some favour.

AND king a Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.
a 2 Kin. 24. 17. 2 Chron. 36. 10. chap. 22. 24.

2 But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake † by the prophet Jeremiah.
† Heb. by the hand of the prophet.

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us.

4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison.

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29. *The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy*] These words do not prove that Nebuchadnezzar had not already come, and compelled Jehoiakim to become his vassal. The force lies in the last words, which predict such a coming as would make the land utterly desolate: and this would be the result of the king throwing off the Chaldæan yoke. Evidently his proud spirit was galled by the humiliation he had undergone, and Keil with much probability thinks that the fast appointed for the ninth month, *v.* 9, was one of many measures taken by him to rouse the patriotism of the people.

30. *He shall have none to sit...*] Cp. ch. xxii. 30. The three months' reign of Jehoiachin was too brief and too destitute of real power to be a contradiction to this prediction. For Jehoiakim's burial see ch. xxii. 19.

31. *the inhabitants of Jerusalem*] They would not have been punished for the crime of the king had not that act only too well typified their own demoralization. Cp. ch. xix. 15, xxxv. 17.

32. *many like words*] The second roll was thus a more complete record of the main lessons taught by Jeremiah during the long course of his inspired ministry than the first had been.

Events during the siege of Jerusalem.

CHAPS. XXXVII., XXXVIII. It is evident that Zedekiah was well affected towards Jeremiah, for he thrice asked his advice, first by a public embassy, *v.* 3, and subsequently in secret, *v.* 17, xxxviii. 14. But his character was far too feeble for him to be capable of that energetic action, which at such a crisis could alone have saved the state. In these two chapters we have an account of his relations with Jeremiah, and of the prophet's personal history up to the capture of Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1. *whom Nebuchadrezzar...made king*] *i.e.* Zedekiah, see 2 K. xxiv. 17.

3. *Zedekiah the king sent*] This embassy is not to be confounded with that recorded in ch. xxi. 1, which took place when Nebuchadnezzar was just marching upon Jerusalem, while this was in the brief interval of hope occasioned by the approach of an Egyptian army to raise the siege. How elated the Jews were by this temporary relief we have already seen, ch. xxxiv. 11, and how miserably they abused it, ib. Zedekiah seems to some extent to have shared their hopes, and to have expected that the prophet would intercede for the city as successfully as Isaiah had done in Hezekiah's days, Isai. xxxvii. 6. Jehucal was a member of the warlike party, ch. xxxviii. 1, as also was the deputy high-priest Zephaniah, but otherwise he was well affected to Jeremiah, see ch. xxi. 1, xxix. 25, lii. 24, 27.

5 Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

6 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

8 And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not †yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. †Heb. *souls.*

10 For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained *but* †wounded men among them, *yet* should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire. †Heb. *thrust through.*

11 ¶ And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was †broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, †Heb. *made to ascend.*

12 Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, †to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. †Or, *to slip away from thence in the midst of the people.*

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4. *came in and went out among...*] *i.e.* he was as yet at perfect freedom like the ordinary people. The embassy seems, however, to have immediately preceded his arrest. The word for prison is a rare form, unnecessarily altered by the Masorites here and in ch. lii. 31 into a more commonplace one.

5. *Then Pharaoh's army*] **And** *Pharaoh's army.* This was Pharaoh-Hophra, ch. xliv. 30, the Apries of Herodotus, II. 161, IV. 159. From Ezek. xvii. 15, we learn that he was an ally of Zedekiah, but his intervention availed nothing. Whether, however, he withdrew without giving Nebuchadnezzar battle, or whether he was defeated, we do not know. The former is the more literal interpretation of *v.* 7. The statement of Nägelsb. that he was slain is a mistake. After a reign of twenty-five years he was dethroned by Amasis, but honourably treated and allowed to inhabit his palace at Sais, where finally he was strangled by the populace. See Lenormant, 'Manuel d'histoire ancienne de l'Orient,' I. 472.

they departed from] The same phrase is translated *are gone up from* in ch. xxxiv. 21, where see note.

7—10. Jeremiah's answer is even more unfavourable than that in ch. xxi. 4—7. Not only will the Egyptian army accomplish nothing, and the Chaldæans certainly return and continue the siege, but so hopeless is resistance that their disabled men would alone suffice to capture the city and burn it to the ground.

10. *wounded men*] The insertion of the word *men* in Hebr. has a diminishing power, and means *some wounded men.* As our idiom requires the substantive always to be inserted, this is liable to be overlooked. Though then the Jews had defeated *the whole army* of the Chaldæans, and only *a few wounded men* remained, yet God would give even these few the victory.

wounded] Lit. *pierced through, i.e.* severely wounded. Its metaphorical use in Lam. iv. 9 of those stricken through with hunger does not justify commentators in giving the word a metaphorical meaning also here.

11. *was broken up from*] *Was* **gone up** *from*, see *v.* 5.

for fear of Pharaoh's army] **Because** *of Pharaoh's army.* It was simply a strategic movement.

12. *to separate himself thence...*] **To receive a share** *thence.* So the Syriac *to divide thence a share with the people.* The Vulg. renders it *to divide thence a possession in the sight of the citizens;* the Targ. *to divide an inheritance which he had there with the people;* and the LXX. *to purchase thence*, which Theodoret explains of buying bread. Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, all render *to obtain for himself a share*, and doubtless this is right. When the siege was temporarily raised, the first object with everybody would be to obtain supplies of food, and accordingly Jeremiah *in the midst of the people, i.e.* accompanied by others, who, like himself, had a right to share in the produce of the priests' lands at Anathoth, started thither to see whether any stores still remained which might be available for their common use. The verb lit. means *to share*, but the form employed here means *to cause to share*, and its use is explained by the presence of his companions, whom he would aid in apportioning the common property. The rendering in the marg. *to slip away from thence* is approved by Rosenm., and that in the text *to separate himself thence* is given by Kimchi, but neither is really tenable.

13 And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.

† Heb. *falsehood*, or, *a lie.*

14 Then said Jeremiah, *It is* †false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

15 Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.

‖ Or, *cells.*

16 ¶ When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon, and into the ‖cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days;

17 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out: and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there *any* word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

18 Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison?

19 Where *are* now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land?

20 Therefore hear now, I pray thee,

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13. *a captain of the ward*] Lit. *master of the oversight, i.e.* captain of the watch. Probably his business was, as Ewald considers, to examine all who went in and out.

the gate of Benjamin] The northern gate leading to Benjamin and thence to Ephraim, whence it is also called the gate of Ephraim, 2 K. xiv. 13; Neh. viii. 16. Cp. ch. xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10.

Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans] Cp. ch. xxi. 9. His well-known views made Jeremiah a suspected person, and probably he was intensely unpopular with the army. Thus Irijah was glad to arrest him, though the charge was absolutely groundless.

14. *the princes*] These were no longer the noble men trained in the days of Josiah, who twice before had proved themselves Jeremiah's friends, ch. xxvi. 16, xxxvi. 19. They probably had been carried captive to Babylon with Jeconiah. The princes now had had their character formed in bad times, and probably remembered with spite the description given of them in chap. xxiv. Assuming therefore that the accusation was true, they first scourged Jeremiah and then imprisoned him.

15. *the house of Jonathan the scribe*] Probably the official residence of the secretary of state, and purposely so built as to serve for a prison. It had now been fixed upon as the prison for political offenders.

16. *into the dungeon, and into the cabins*] Dungeon is lit. *house of a cistern* or pit, and thus was evidently underground. In this cistern-like excavation were several cells or arched vaults. The word does not occur elsewhere in Hebr., but in the cognate dialects it means stalls, shops. In one of these vaults with little light and less ventilation Jeremiah remained *many days, i.e.* a long time. From the recent systematic examination of Jerusalem we learn that the whole of the plateau on which the temple and palace stood is honeycombed underneath with works of various kinds. Captain Warren describes thirty-four such excavations, some of which are cisterns and others passages. One of these extends about 150 feet from north to south, and nearly as much from east to west: and its roof is supported by massive rude piers, which give the place a look of elephantine strength.

17. *in his house*] Zedekiah therefore had ordered him to be brought to the royal palace. In the interval indicated by the *many days* of *v.* 16, the king of Babylon had renewed the siege, and was pressing it so vigorously that the imminence of danger had aroused the conscience of the wavering Zedekiah, who still however only dared consult the prophet in secret.

thou shalt be delivered...] Cp. ch. xxxii. 3, 4, xxxiv. 2, 3.

18—21. While abating nothing from the severity of his denunciation, Jeremiah prays for milder treatment, protesting his innocence, *v.* 18, and appealing to facts to prove that his predictions were true, *v.* 19. Zedekiah, who was of a kindly disposition, and remembered Jeremiah as an honoured prophet in the days of his father, now gives him roomy quarters in the court of the guard, where he wrote the cheerful prophecy contained in chaps. xxx.—xxxiii.; and as provisions were growing scarce, he orders that a loaf of bread should be given him every day.

† Heb. *let my supplication fall.*

O my lord, the king: †let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there.

21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1 *Jeremiah, by a false suggestion, is put into the dungeon of Malchiah.* 7 *Ebed-melech, by suit, getteth him some enlargement.* 14 *Upon secret conference he counselleth the king by yielding to save his life.* 24 *By the king's instructions he concealeth the conference from the princes.*

THEN Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, [a]He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live.

[a] chap. 21. 9.

3 Thus saith the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it.

4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the †welfare of this people, but the hurt.

† Heb. *peace.*

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he *is* in your hand: for the

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20. *let my supplication...be accepted*] Lit. *fall before thee.* See note on ch. xxxvi. 7.

21. *that they should commit...*] The verb is that applied to the safe keeping of the roll in ch. xxxvi. 20, and means that Jeremiah was given into some one's charge.

court of the prison] *Court of the* **watch**, ch. xxxii. 2.

a piece of bread] Lit. *a circle, i.e.* a round cake *of bread*, cp. Exod. xxix. 23; 1 S. x. 3.

the bakers' street] It is usual in oriental towns for each trade to have a special place set apart for it. Cp. "tower of the ovens," A. V. furnaces, Neh. iii. 11, xii. 38, and see Smith's 'Bible Dict.' under *Bread.*

CHAP. XXXVIII. The object of the princes in imprisoning Jeremiah in Jonathan's house had been to get him out of the way, as no doubt his predictions did depress the minds of the people. This purpose was frustrated by his removal to the guard-house, as he was there constantly in contact with the soldiery, and his friends had free access to him, ch. xxxii. 12. Shortly therefore before the capture of the city, when but few men of war remained, *v.* 4, and the deserters were many, *v.* 19, the princes determined upon the prophet's death, and as Zedekiah was powerless, *v.* 5, his unwilling assent was soon gained, and Jeremiah was thrown into a miry pit.

1. Of the four princes named, Shephatiah is never mentioned elsewhere, Gedaliah was possibly a son of the Pashur who put Jeremiah in the stocks, Jucal is the Jehucal of ch. xxxvii. 3, and Pashur appears in ch. xxi. 1 as a member of the embassy sent to the prophet at the beginning of the siege.

had spoken] **Spake.** The verb is the pres. part., implying that the prophet often used the words.

2, 3. *He that remaineth*] These words are substantially the same as those spoken to the embassy, ch. xxi. 9, 10, but no doubt they were frequently in Jeremiah's mouth.

4. *for thus*] **Because.** See Nägelsb. on ch. xxix. 28.

he weakeneth the hands of...] *i.e.* he makes the men of war dispirited. No doubt this was true. Jeremiah, however, did not speak as a private person, but as the representative of the government, the temporal ruler in a theocracy being responsible directly to God, and not indirectly as rulers now. The princes, however, were determined upon war at all hazards, and by putting a prophet to death, and thus openly rebelling against Jehovah, they would at all events strike terror into the hearts of all who were for peace, and force the king and people to cast in their lot with them.

that remain] The siege was far advanced, and the garrison reduced to a handful.

the welfare] Lit. *the peace.* See ch. xxix. 7.

5. *he* is *in your hand*] The princes had not the right to put Jeremiah to death without trial, but in a hard-pressed siege civil rights give way to what is regarded as a necessity of

king *is* not *he that* can do *any* thing against you.

6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son ‖of Hammelech, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

‖ Or, *of the king.*

7 ¶ Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and †he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city.

† Heb. *he will die.*

10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men †with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

† Heb. *in thine hand.*

11 So Ebed-melech took the men

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war. Graf's view therefore that Zedekiah only meant that the prophet should be taken back to the more rigorous imprisonment of Jonathan's house is improbable in itself as well as at variance with their request for leave to put him to death, *v.* 4.

for the king, &c.] *For the king can do nothing against you nor with you.* See Note at end of Chapter. There lies in the words a tone of reproach. The princes knew that they were asking what it was painful to Zedekiah to grant, but he had long yielded the conduct of the war into their hands, and as they affirmed that Jeremiah's death was a matter of necessity, he did not dare refuse it them.

6. *the dungeon*] **The cistern.** Every house in Jerusalem was supplied with a subterranean cistern, so well constructed that we never read of the city suffering in a siege from want of water. See Note on ch. vi. 7. So large were they that when dry they seem to have been regularly used for prisons, Zech. ix. 11 (where for *cistern* the A.V. has *pit*). So here Jeremiah had to be lowered into the cistern with cords.

Malchiah the son of Hammelech] Or, *of the king*, not of Zedekiah, but a prince of the royal blood. Hammelech, however, is quite as probably a proper name. See note on ch. xxxvi. 26.

the court of the prison] *Of the* **guard.** They threw Jeremiah into the nearest cistern, having probably a superstitious feeling about shedding his blood, but intending that he should die of starvation. On the view entertained by many that Ps. lxix. was composed by Jeremiah when in this cistern, see notes there.

7. *Ebed-melech*] *i.e. the king's slave.* By Ethiopian or Cushite is meant the Cushite of Africa, or negro. Such negro eunuchs were probably regarded as adding to the king's state and luxury, and so had much influence, which occasionally they used well, Isai. lvi. 4. As we find another eunuch named Nathan-melech, 2 K. xxiii. 11, it seems as if they took their names from the king, while the royal family and the princes generally bore names compounded with the appellations of the Deity.

9. *he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is*] Lit. *he is dead upon the spot for hunger, i.e.* he is as good as dead. The tense, like the language of the whole verse, befits an impetuous eager man speaking in great excitement. But the exaggeration of the words not merely expressed the eunuch's fears, but gave also a reason for hastening at once to Jeremiah's deliverance. Critics like Keil, who argue that Ebed-melech could not have meant to say that Jeremiah was dead, have probably never been in a fright in their lives; really at such times people imagine the worst. The eunuch's speech is also inconsecutive. If Jeremiah died upon the spot, he did not die of hunger; but the meaning is good. If the prophet did not die on the spot of violence, still death was inevitable from starvation. *In the place where he is*, lit. *under him, i.e.* at once, **on the spot.** So in 2 S. ii. 23 Asahel *died on the spot, i.e.* there and then, without a struggle.

there is *no more bread in the city*] All private stores were consumed, and therefore unless Jeremiah could draw a soldier's rations as he had done hitherto from the magazines, ch. xxxvii. 21, he must inevitably die of hunger.

10. *thirty men*] So large a number suggests that Zedekiah expected some resistance. Ewald, Hitzig, &c., think thirty too many, and substitute three, against the authority of all the versions, but Zedekiah being upon the spot probably knew best how many to send. He had shewn in his answer to the princes that he was annoyed at their conduct, and when he heard of their cruelty to the prophet, for whom undoubtedly he had a great regard, he sum-

with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

13 So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

14 ¶ Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the [1]third entry that *is* in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me.

[1] Or, *principal.*

15 Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare *it* unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?

16 So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house:

18 But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

19 And Zedekiah the king said unto

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moned up courage enough to rescue him, and the large number of men whom he sent proves that he was well aware that he was taking a strong measure in reversing the acts of his generals.

before he die] Zedekiah made due allowance for the excitement of the eunuch, and very rightly understood that his assertion that Jeremiah was dead was a figure of speech.

11. *under the treasury*] **To** a room *under the storechamber*. By the insertion of the preposition the Hebrew escapes the ambiguity of the A.V.

old cast clouts, &c.] **Rags of torn garments and rags of worn-out garments.** This thoughtful act of the negro shews his kindliness, the depth of the cistern, that force would be necessary in pulling out Jeremiah, and therefore that the mire was deep, and possibly that Jeremiah was enfeebled by his privations, and required gentle treatment.

12. *thine armholes*] Lit. *the joints of thy hands*. As the meaning arm-holes is certainly the sense here, this passage settles the translation in Ezek. xiii. 18.

13. *court of the prison*] **Of the watch.** Jeremiah was restored to his old quarters, and would draw rations with the soldiers as before.

14. *Then Zedekiah...*] This interview probably took place shortly after Jeremiah's deliverance, and shews with what hopeless irresolution the king wavered between the princes and the prophet.

the third entry] There was probably a passage from the palace to the temple at this entry, and the meeting would take place in some private chamber close by. Cp. 2 K. xvi. 18. There is nothing to be said for the rendering *principal* in the marg.

I will ask thee a thing...] Or, *I ask of thee a word, hold not back from me a word*, i.e. a prophetic word or intimation as to the result of the siege, such as previously he had asked for, ch. xxxvii. 17.

15. *wilt thou not hearken...?*] **Thou wilt not hearken.** There is a note of interrogation in the Hebrew to the previous clause, but none to this.

16. *that made us this soul*] This very unusual addition to the formula of an oath was no doubt intended to strengthen it. By acknowledging that his soul was God's workmanship Zedekiah also implied his belief in His continued power over it. For the more usual formula see 1 S. xx. 3, xxv. 26.

17. *the king of Babylon's princes*] After the besieged had been driven back into the city and their first sallies repulsed, Nebuchadnezzar no longer conducted the siege in person, but seems to have gone to Riblah, ch. xxxix. 5. Ancient sieges were not much better than blockades, and as they were very tedious, the Chaldæan generals seem to have

Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver *thee*. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.

21 But if thou refuse to go forth, this *is* the word that the LORD hath shewed me:

22 And, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house *shall be* brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those *women* shall say, †Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, *and* they are turned away back.

† Heb. *Men of thy peace.*

23 So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and †thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

† Heb. *thou shalt burn, &c.*

24 ¶ Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die.

25 But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king, hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee:

26 Then thou shalt say unto them, I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there.

27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So †they *were silent from him.*

† Heb.

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had authority to grant mild terms if the citizens surrendered. The army could then be once again concentrated for fresh enterprises.

19. *the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans*] These deserters probably formed a numerous party, and had always counselled submission. They would be indignant at Zedekiah; for, having rejected their advice when it would have saved Jerusalem from all the horrors of a siege, he was now following it when it was too late.

22. *all the women that are left*] Not Zedekiah's wives, who are mentioned in the next verse, but partly women belonging to the harems of former kings, which always went with the crown, 1 K. ii. 22, and partly attendants and slaves. Thus Sennacherib says that he compelled Hezekiah to give up to him "his daughters, female inmates of his palace and female slaves," 'Records of the Past,' I. 39.

Thy friends...] This satirical song is either moulded upon Obad. 7, or both may be taken from some common proverb. It should be translated as a distich:

Thy friends have urged thee on and prevailed upon thee:
Thy feet are stuck in the mire; they have turned back.

Thy friends, lit. men of thy peace, thy acquaintance, see ch. xx. 10. They urge Zedekiah on to a hopeless struggle with the Chaldæans, and when he gets into difficulties they leave him in the lurch.

23. *So they...*] **And** *they....* In addition to the ridicule there shall be the actual miseries of the capture.

thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire] *Thou* **shalt burn** *this city with fire* (marg.). It shall be thy own act as completely as if done with thine own hand.

24—27. Zedekiah foresaw that the princes must hear of his conference with Jeremiah. Should they also learn that he had asked the prophet's opinion, and had received the advice to surrender the city, their anger would know no bounds, and not only would Jeremiah be certainly put to death, but Zedekiah would expose himself to contumelious treatment. He commands the prophet therefore to keep silence on every point, except the natural request that he should not be sent back to Jonathan's dungeons. On Jonathan's house see ch. xxxvii. 15.

26. *I presented...*] Lit. *I made my supplication fall before the king*, cp. chs. xxxvi. 7, xxxvii. 20.

27. *he told them according to all these words*] *i.e.* he told them what was true, but not the whole truth, nor what they wanted to know. Was he justified in this course? It was necessary to save his own life, and to prevent an open rupture between the king and his generals; he was also ordered to be silent by one to whom obedience was due, and the princes were not questioning him in due course of law, but by a power which they had usurp-

left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived.

28 So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

ed. Still had the issue only concerned himself it might have been perhaps his duty to have spoken the whole truth: though this is by no means certain; for the princes had no right to question him as to the king's conduct.

28. *and he was* there *when*...] This clause belongs to the next chapter, but the passage is confused, and the two following verses must be taken parenthetically. The whole may then be translated, *And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken (in the ninth year of Zedekiah Nebuchadrezzar came...and in the eleventh year the city was broken up) that all the princes*, &c. The translation of the A. V. is impossible.

NOTE on CHAP. XXXVIII. 5.

The construction is peculiar, being a double accusative: *For the king cannot as to you a word.* The Syr. translates, *for the king can say nothing to you;* and the Targ., *for the king can deny you nothing.* More probably it means, *for the king is powerless as to you*, taking in two meanings, (1) he can do nothing against you, nor (2) with you. All real power is in your hands, and you are ready to exercise it against the king's wishes.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1 *Jerusalem is taken.* 4 *Zedekiah is made blind, and sent to Babylon.* 8 *The city ruinated,* 9 *the people captivated.* 11 *Nebuchadrezzar's charge for the good usage of Jeremiah.* 15 *God's promise to Ebed-melech.*

The Capture of Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXXIX. In this chapter we have a brief summary of the siege and capture of Jerusalem, the fate of Zedekiah, the destruction of the city, and the removal of the inhabitants, the good treatment of Jeremiah, and finally the promise made to Ebed-melech, all of which, excepting the two last particulars, occur again in ch. lii. 4—16; 2 K. xxv. 1—12. Chiefly for this reason Movers, Hitzig, Ewald, Graf, &c., regard the first fourteen verses as an interpolation, though, excepting parts of *vv.* 4, 7, 10, 13, they are contained in the LXX. In support of this view Ewald argues that *v.* 2 is at variance with lii. 6, inasmuch as one gives the ninth day of the fourth month as the date of the capture of the city, the other as that when the famine became severe. Really both agree, the second narrative implying that the city was surrendered because the bread was all consumed, and not because of an assault of the besiegers. His next argument is that the account given of Jeremiah is irreconcileable with what we are told elsewhere. For in *vv.* 11, 12 we read that it was Nebuzaradan who delivered Jeremiah from the watch-house; but he did not arrive at Jerusalem till a month after its capture, lii. 12, whereas we gather from xxxviii. 28 that Jeremiah was delivered from his imprisonment at once. For this assertion, however, there is no proof, as the words quoted rather mean that the prophet was not sent back to Jonathan's dungeon, but remained in the court of the watch till the siege was over. When that had taken place the princes, to whom the passage in ch. xxxviii. 28 refers, would have no more power against Jeremiah, and his further fate is left to be told afterwards. Ewald, however, does point out a real difficulty in reconciling xxxix. 14 with xl. 1—4. In the first passage we find the commanders of the Babylonian army at Nebuzaradan's order setting Jeremiah free, and committing him to Gedaliah's charge, whereas in the latter he appears at Ramah in chains, and is there given his liberty by Nebuzaradan himself. But it appears from xl. 6 that during this month Gedaliah had left Jerusalem and gone to Mizpah, a city in the immediate neighbourhood, and as he was not at home to protect the prophet, nothing is more probable than that he in company with the main body of captives was brought to Ramah in chains. We learn from Acts xxvii. 42 that soldiers in old times had rough ways of doing their duty; and as it was their business to bring to Ramah, probably in batches, all the prisoners taken in Jerusalem, that Nebuzaradan might select from them such as were worth removing to Babylon, and either put the rest to death or let them go free, it is not likely that they would make any careful distinctions, but would take such measures as would enable them to deliver their prisoners safely without requiring the services of too large a guard. Finally the Chaldæans probably thought very little of making Jeremiah walk five miles to Ramah with manacles on his hands, nor must we over-estimate their regard for him. Evidently he had friends who had represented to Nebuchadnezzar that he had always been on the Babylonian side, and had urged the Jewish kings to be faithful vassals to

[a] 2 Kin. 25. 1. chap. 52. 4.

[a] IN the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.

2 *And* in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth *day* of the month, the city was broken up.

3 And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, *even* Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

4 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he [†] gave judgment upon him.

[†] Heb. *spake with him judgments.*

6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

7 Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him [†] with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

[†] Heb. *with two brasen chains,* or, *fetters.*

8 ¶ And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

9 Then Nebuzar-adan the [‖†] captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.

[‖] Or, *chief marshal.*
[†] Heb. *chief of the executioners,* or, *slaughtermen:* and so ver. 10, 11, &c.

10 But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields [†] at the same time.

[†] Heb. *in that day.*

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him, and had foretold the triumph of his arms. They might even have given Nebuchadnezzar some idea of the sanctity of his office. But Jeremiah belonged nevertheless to the conquered side, and would have to take his chance with the mass till order was gradually restored. The internal difficulties therefore are not very serious, while the external evidence (of the versions, &c.) for the authenticity of these verses is considerable.

1, 2. Cp. 2 K. xxv. 1—4. The siege lasted just one year and six months.

3. *all the princes...*] These princes were four in number, namely, (1) *Nergal-Sharezer, i.e.* Nirgal-sar-usur, *May Nergal protect the king;* (2) *Samgar-Nebo, Be gracious, O Nebo;* (3) *Sarsechim.* No explanation is given at present of this name. He was Rab-saris, *i.e.* chief of the eunuchs, see note on 2 K. xviii. 17. (4) Another *Nergal-sharezer*, who was Rab-mag, *i.e.* chief of the Magians. He is known in history as Neriglissar, the son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, and probably his vicegerent during his seven years of madness. Two years after his death Neriglissar murdered Evil-Merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's son, and seized the crown, but after a reign of four years was slain in battle against Cyrus, when disputing with him the crown of Media. His identification with the Rab-mag is shewn by his being called Rabu-emga in the cuneiform inscriptions (Schrader, 'Keilinschr.,' 273; Lenormant, 'Manuel,' II. 240; Smith's 'Bib. Dict.').

As Nebushasban is called the Rab-saris in *v.* 13, Hitzig and others think that the text in this verse is corrupt, and that there were only three princes, whose names are most plausibly arranged thus: (1) Nergal-Sharezer, the Samgar, or cup-bearer; (2) Nebo-Shasban, the Rab-saris; and (3) a second Nergal-Sharezer, the Rab-mag. In support of this correction of the second name, they urge that Nebo is never found elsewhere at the end of a compound, and that the LXX. read Ναβουσάχαρ, and other copies Ναβουσαρσεχίμ. The Syr., Vulg., and Targ. support the Hebrew text.

the middle gate] Probably that which separated the city of Zion from the lower town, 2 K. xx. 4, xxiii. 8.

4—10. Cp. 2 K. xxv. 4—12. The differences between the two accounts are slight. We here read, *v.* 4, *when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, i.e.* when they saw—not literally, for it was night, but perceived by the confusion—that the Chaldæans had gained the

11 ¶ Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah † to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying,

† Heb. *by the hand of.*

12 Take him, and † look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.

† Heb. *set thine eyes upon him.*

13 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the king of Babylon's princes;

14 Even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

15 ¶ Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

16 Go and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be *accomplished* in that day before thee.

17 But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou *art* afraid.

18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto

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lower town, and were approaching the gate of Zion, they took advantage of the darkness to attempt to escape. In *v.* 6 we have the slaughter of the nobles, the highborn men, see Note on ch. xxvii. 20, also mentioned in ch. lii. 10, but omitted in 2 K. xxv., where, however, it is recorded that a month elapsed between the capture of Jerusalem and the arrival of Nebuzaradan with orders to burn it. Again in *v.* 9 it is said that the deserters "fell away to him," *i.e.* to Nebuzaradan, whereas in both 2 K. xxv. 11 and in Jer. lii. 15 it is more correctly said that they fell away to the king of Babylon. Their desertion had really taken place long before Nebuzaradan's arrival. Lastly in *v.* 10 it is said that he gave some of the poorest of the people vineyards and arable lands, whereas in the parallel places it is said that he left them to be vinedressers and husbandmen. But the meaning is much the same. The land by right of conquest had become the property of the king of Babylon, and they would hold it as colonists under him.

11. *Nebuchadrezzar*] The mild treatment of Jeremiah is here referred to an express order of Nebuchadnezzar, and that such was the fact is proved by his being set free at Ramah instead of being taken to Riblah to wait the king's orders. The incompleteness therefore here of the text of the LXX. is of no importance. Very probably Nebuchadnezzar had given orders also to Nebuzaradan to make Gedaliah governor, and possibly the surrender of the city to the Chaldæans, when the famine became insupportable, had been arranged by him.

12. *Take him...*] This command, especially the latter part of it, was executed at Ramah. The generals in the first confusion did no more than take measures for Jeremiah's personal security.

13. *Nebuzar-adan*] This name is found in the Assyrian inscriptions as Nabu-zir-iddina, *Nebo has given offspring;* and Nebushasban as Nabu-sizibanni, *Nebo save me.* Schrader, 'Keilinschr.' 236, 275. On his identity with Sarsechim see note on *v.* 3.

14. *that he should carry him home*] Lit. *to take him out into the house.* If Gedaliah's house had been meant the Hebrew would have been *to his house.* Hitzig therefore understands the temple, and Graf the king's house. The latter seems the easiest. Jeremiah was to be taken out of the court of the watch, and placed in the palace close by, which probably was used as a sort of head-quarters until on the evacuation of Jerusalem it was burnt.

he dwelt among the people] *i.e.* was no longer in custody, but master of his own actions.

15. *the word of the LORD*] This prophecy probably came to Jeremiah shortly after his interview with Zedekiah, ch. xxxviii. 14, but is added here as a supplement in order not to break the sequence of events.

16. *Go and speak*] As Jeremiah was confined in the court of the watch, either Ebed-melech's quarters were within its precincts, or more probably he could obtain permission to visit the eunuch from time to time.

17. *of whom thou* art *afraid*] From the promise in the next verse that he should not fall by the sword, these seem to have been the Chaldæans. Ebed-melech apparently looked forward with much alarm to the bloodshed sure to take place at the storming of the city.

18. *a prey unto thee*] An unexpected and unlooked-for gain, chs. xxi. 9, xxxviii. 2.

thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER XL.

1 Jeremiah, being set free by Nebuzar-adan, goeth to Gedaliah. 7 The dispersed Jews repair unto him. 13 Johanan revealing Ishmael's conspiracy is not believed.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in ‖chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

‖ Or, *manicles.*

2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.

3 Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.

4 And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which *were* upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and †I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land *is* before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go.

† Heb. *I will set mine eye upon thee.*

5 Now while he was not yet gone

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thou hast put thy trust in me] He had given proof of faith in so courageously delivering God's prophet when the princes had demanded his death, and the king had cowardly consented to their request.

Jeremiah's History after the Capture of Jerusalem.

Chaps. xl.—xliv.

CHAP. XL. 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah from the* LORD] As what follows is mainly a historical narrative, it seems that this title was appropriate not merely to a prediction of the future, but to an account of the past, if written by a prophet. Ewald's view that the title belongs to the prophecy in ch. xlii. 7—22 is untenable, as the inserted matter is too long to be a mere parenthesis, as in chs. xxxii. 1, xxxiv. 8. The Jews regarded history as inspired if written by a seer, and thus their historical books are called The early Prophets. "The formula, the word of Jehovah, is never, however, found as the title of a purely historical section" (Nägelsb.).

The history briefly shews how after the deliverance of Jeremiah there was a gleam of hope for the land under the righteous government of Gedaliah; how this was darkened over by the crime of a prince of the royal family; and how the captains in panic first asked the advice of Jeremiah, and then in defiance of it dragged him down into Egypt.

Ramah] See ch. xxxi. 15. Probably all the prisoners of note, who might be worth taking to Babylon, were collected at Ramah indiscriminately, and examined there. See introduction to ch. xxxix.

bound in chains] Only upon the hands, as appears from *v.* 4. The prisoners were probably fastened together in squads to prevent attempts at escape or straggling.

among all that were carried away captive] Lit. *in the middle of the whole carrying away, i.e.* of those selected as worth taking to Babylon. Probably many such persons had been collected in *the house*, see ch. xxxix. 14, and Jeremiah was now treated exactly like the rest.

2, 3. These two verses are so thoroughly in Jeremiah's style that it seems probable that Nebuzaradan had made many inquiries of Gedaliah in the interval, and was well informed of what the prophet had foretold.

4. *upon thine hand*] The old versions and some MSS. have the pl., perhaps because *manacles* is pl., but the sing. is just as likely to be right. They were probably fastened together in couples by one hand, and a rope passed down the centre to bind them in a long line.

I will look well unto thee] *I will set mine eye upon thee* (marg.), exactly answering to our phrase, I will keep my eye upon thee, will not neglect thee.

5. *Now while he was not yet gone back*] No satisfactory exposition of these words has yet been given, but most modern commentators accept Ewald's correction of the text (ישׁב for ישׁוב), and render *And as he yet answered nothing, Return then*, he said, *to Gedaliah*, &c. To this Ewald adds the remark, that probably the captain of the body-guard had hoped that Jeremiah would have been glad to accompany him to Babylon, but that when he saw him hesitating he pressed him no longer, but let him return to his friend and protector. The chief objection to this explanation is that the Hebr. verb, which lit. signifies *he caused to return*, requires the insertion

back, *he said*, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

6 Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

7 ¶ Now when all the captains of the forces which *were* in the fields, *even* they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;

8 Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

10 As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, †to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and

† Heb. *to stand before.*

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of *word* after it to make it mean *answered*. The ancient versions are hopelessly at fault in dealing with this clause; the only rendering of note is that of Symmachus, who gives *But until I depart, return and dwell with Gedaliah.*

hath made governor] Lit. *Pakid*, ch. i. 10, xx. 1.

victuals] **A ration** *of food.* It is the word used in Prov. xv. 17, *a ration*, A. V. dinner, *of herbs*, and was only enough for his immediate wants.

a reward] **A present.** Originally the word meant a mess of food from the table, Gen. xliii. 34; 2 S. xi. 8, but in time it came to signify any present, 2 Chro. xxiv. 6; Esther ii. 18.

6. *Mizpah*] See note on 2 K. xxv. 25, and Smith's 'Bib. Dict.' under *Mizpeh*, no. 6.

7. *in the fields*] *In the* **field**, ch. iv. 17, xxxii. 43. As Judæa was full of fastnesses, it would have been impossible for the Chaldæans to pursue every band of fugitives, and thus they might have long maintained a predatory war. But the appointment of Gedaliah gave them confidence, and they began to gather round him, and peace was thus in a fair way of being restored.

men, and women, and children] The *men* would be the old and infirm: the *women* those whose husbands and protectors had perished in the war. Among them were the king's daughters, ch. xli. 10, their brothers having been put to death at Riblah. The word rendered *children* includes all the inferior members of a household, Gen. xliii. 8, xlvii. 12.

8. *Ishmael*, &c.] See on 2 K. xxv. 23.

Ephai] This is the more usual spelling, 1 Chro. ii. 46, 47, but the Hebr. text, the LXX., and Vulg., have Ophai. He was a native of Netophah, a village near Bethlehem, 1 Chro. ii. 54; Neh. vii. 26; Robinson II. 344.

Maachathite] See Deut. iii. 14, and 2 K. xxv. 23. As Jezaniah was a foreigner his genealogy is not mentioned, but his name, which signifies *Jehovah weigheth (men's actions)*, shews that he was attached to the Jews' religion, and possibly was a proselyte. But see note on ch. xlii. 1.

10. *to serve the Chaldeans*] Lit. *to stand before the Chaldeans.* To be their minister, and lieutenant, see note on ch. xxxv. 19. By some accident the marginal note indicating this is put in most of our Bibles opposite *v.* 9, where it gives an entirely wrong meaning, and is at variance with the Hebrew text. The captains were not to hold office under the king of Babylon, but must be his subjects. And so in 2 K. xxv. 24, Gedaliah says, *Fear not to be servants, i.e.* slaves=subjects, *of the Chaldæans.*

which will come unto us] Gedaliah evidently supposed that officers of high rank would come from time to time from Babylon to look after the king's interests. But whatever was ordered would be done through him, as being the prime minister; and as he would also be consulted on all points, he would be able to ensure the safety of the captains and their men.

gather ye wine] As Jerusalem was captured in the fifth month, August, it would now be autumn, and though no corn had been sown, there would be fruit upon the trees,

dwell in your cities that ye have taken.

11 Likewise when all the Jews that *were* in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan;

12 Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

13 ¶ Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah,

14 And said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah † to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not.

† Heb. *to strike thee in soul?*

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know *it:* wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish?

16 But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

CHAPTER XLI.

1 Ishmael, treacherously killing Gedaliah and others, purposeth with the residue to flee unto the Ammonites. 11 Johanan recovereth the captives, and mindeth to flee into Egypt.

NOW it came to pass in the seventh month, *that* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah.

2 Then arose Ishmael the son of

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grapes, figs, olives, &c., enough to maintain the scanty population during the winter.

your cities that ye have taken] Or, **seized**, the verb implying violence. Every captain had probably occupied some place by force as his headquarters, and Gedaliah bids them retain them, his whole policy being to reconstruct the state as quickly as possible; and therefore he frankly accepts the whole present state of things, as a necessary step towards re-establishing confidence.

11. *had left a remnant*] Not only had the Jews confidence in Gedaliah personally, but the fact that Nebuchadnezzar had appointed a lieutenant of their own race proved to them that he had no intention of exterminating them, but was willing to let the rest of them take quiet root again in their own land.

13. *in the fields*] *In the* **field**, see *v.* 7.

14. *Baalis*] What object he can have had in murdering Gedaliah is difficult to say. As an ally, however, of Zedekiah, ch. xxvii. 3, and an enemy of the Chaldæans, he may have had a spite against the family of Ahikam for opposing, as most probably they did at Jeremiah's instigation, the league proposed in ch. xxvii. But see on ch. xli. 6. Ishmael's motive no doubt was envy and spite at seeing a subject who had always opposed the war now invested with kingly power, in place of the royal family.

15. *the remnant in Judah perish*] Johanan plainly saw that the sole hope of the remnant was in Gedaliah's influence with Nebuchadnezzar. But not only was Gedaliah too just and brave to murder Ishmael, but probably Johanan, though faithful in this instance, was not a man to inspire confidence, and evidently Gedaliah had no trust in him.

CHAP. XLI. 1. *in the seventh month*] The government of Gedaliah thus lasted less than two months, cp. note on ch. xl. 10; and 2 K. xxv. 8, 25.

of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him] Rather, *and of the princes of the king,* **and** *ten men with him.* Ishmael was of the seed of the kingdom, descended probably from Elishama the son of David, 2 S. v. 16, and was also one of the grandees of the kingdom. Ten grandees each with his retinue would have aroused suspicion, but the smallness of Ishmael's following put Gedaliah completely off his guard. As however the above translation requires the repetition of the preposition *of*, others render *and princes* (lit. great ones, grandees) *of the king, and ten men*, &c.; *i.e.* they suppose that two or three grandees accompanied him.

Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, *even* with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, *and* the men of war.

4 And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew *it*,

5 That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, *even* fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them* to the house of the LORD.

6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, †weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.

† Heb. *in going and weeping.*

7 And it was *so*, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, *and cast them* into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that *were* with him.

8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbare, and slew them not among their brethren.

‖ Or, *near Gedaliah.*

9 Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain ‖† because of

† Heb. *by the hand,* or, *by the side of Gedaliah.*

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3. *all the Jews*] *i.e.* those in Gedaliah's house. So too the Chaldæans were the body-guard, left more as a mark of honour than for real strength, and probably were not very numerous. As the captains and all their men were away gathering fruits, and Gedaliah unprepared, it probably was no very difficult matter for Ishmael and his few armed attendants.

5. *Shechem*] The Sychar of John iv. 5, and modern Nablous.

Shiloh] See on ch. vii. 12. The Vatican Codex of the LXX. reads *Salem*, which, according to Robinson III. 102, was close to Shechem, while Shiloh lay eighteen miles to the south. For this very slight reason Hitz., Graf, and others would substitute Salem, but as Shiloh lay upon the road from Shechem to Jerusalem there is no real ground for disturbing the Hebr. text.

Samaria] These three towns all lay in the tribe of Ephraim, and in the district planted by Shalmaneser with Cuthites; but though the fact of their having cut themselves, a heathen practice forbidden by the law, Deut. xiv. 1, is suspicious, yet they were probably pious Israelites, going up to Jerusalem, carrying the meat-offering usual at the feast of Tabernacles, of which this was the season, and mourning over the destruction, not of the city, but of the temple, to the repairs of which we find them contributing in Josiah's time, 2 Chro. xxxiv. 9.

having cut themselves] See note on ch. xvi. 6.

offerings] **A meat-offering**, a minchah; for its description see Lev. ii. 1—16.

to the house of the LORD] Though the temple was in ruins, the site would still be holy.

6. *Ishmael...went forth*] Ishmael's conduct seems to have been dictated by the malicious desire utterly to frustrate Gedaliah's work. He had been endeavouring to re-establish confidence: Ishmael fills everything with terror, and destroys the last possibility of the land being in peace. This was possibly the object also of Baalis. He did not wish to see a firm settled government in Judæa, nor the people once again returning back to their own homes.

weeping all along as he went] Lit. *going a going and weeping*. By this artifice he lured them into Mizpah, under the pretext perhaps that they ought to shew to Gedaliah the respect due to him as the king of Babylon's viceroy.

7. *into the midst of the pit*] *Of the* **cistern.** See *v.* 9. The words inserted in the A. V. *and cast them* are implied in the Hebr. idiom.

8. *treasures*] **Hidden stores**, translated *hidden riches* in Isai. xlv. 3. The natives of Palestine to this day conceal their corn in subterranean chambers, the entrances to which are carefully concealed in dangerous times. Robinson often refers to them, *e.g.* II. 385. These stores would be of great value to Ishmael in his retreat back to Baalis, especially if he was to take many captives with him.

9. *the pit*] **Cistern.** This cistern was in the midst of the city, and could not therefore be, as Hitz. supposed, a ditch to protect the

Gedaliah, *was* it which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: *and* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *them that were* slain.

10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that *were* in Mizpah, *even* the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites.

11 ¶ But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,

12 Then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that *are* in Gibeon.

13 Now it came to pass, *that* when all the people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, then they were glad.

14 So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah.

15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

16 Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after *that* he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *even* mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon:

17 And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which

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fortifications. There is no reason why the word should not have its usual signification; for when Asa fortified Mizpah with the materials which Baasha had collected for his works at Ramah, 1 K. xv. 22, he would as a matter of primary necessity dig a large cistern in order to supply the fortress with water. Into this cistern Ishmael now cast the dead bodies of the men he had slain.

because of Gedaliah] **By the side** *of Gedaliah.* Ishmael had already thrown Gedaliah's body there, and now cast beside it those of the pilgrims. The Hebrew literally is, *by the hand of Gedaliah*, but the above is the rendering of the Syriac, and is supported by the use of the Hebrew particle in Job xv. 23. See also note on ch. vi. 3.

10. *the king's daughters*] Not only the actual children of Zedekiah, but such other female members of the royal family as the Chaldæans had not cared to take to Babylon.

12. *the great waters that* are *in Gibeon*] Robinson, 'Res.' II. 136, describes an open pool still existing at Gibeon, and a large subterranean reservoir fed by a copious natural spring, for which see note on 2 S. ii. 13. As Gibeon is only about two miles north of Mizpah, it would appear as if Ishmael had remained there some little time, expecting perhaps that his old companions in arms would take sides with him, now that the usurper, as he deemed him, was slain. On hearing of their anger at his misdeed, he endeavoured to escape with his booty, but is overtaken, and loses two out of the ten men with whom he had done so much evil.

14. *cast about*] *i.e. turned round, faced about.* Ishmael and his ten men were too few to control them, as soon as aid was near. He had been driving them eastward towards the land of Ammon, but at the sight of Johanan they wheeled round and hastened towards him.

16. *mighty men of war*] Besides those present with Gedaliah, all of whom Ishmael slew, *v.* 3, there seem to have been other soldiers at Mizpah, whom he was able to surprise and make prisoners. Probably after Gedaliah had fallen little opposition would be made to Ishmael; for till the captains came the soldiers would not know whether Ishmael might not be acknowledged as king. He probably had some such expectation when he undertook the expedition, and thus ten men might be ample, as a general panic would ensue as soon as he had slain Gedaliah's immediate friends and the few Chaldæan soldiers. The Jewish soldiers were probably not well inclined to a leading member of the peace party, who may even have been instrumental in delivering Jerusalem to the enemy, and would do little to resist a prince of the royal blood.

eunuchs] Among these probably was Ebed-melech, ch. xxxix. 18, and the other attendants upon the royal harem.

17. *the habitation of Chimham*] The He-

is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt,

18 Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

CHAPTER XLII.

1 Johanan desireth Jeremiah to inquire of God, promising obedience to his will. 7 Jeremiah assureth him of safety in Judea, 13 and destruction in Egypt. 19 He reproveth their hypocrisy, in requiring of the Lord that which they meant not.

THEN all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people, from the least even unto the greatest, came near,

2 And said unto Jeremiah the prophet, ‖Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:)

‖ Or, *Let our supplication fall before thee.*

3 That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard *you;* behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, *that* whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you; I will keep nothing back from you.

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us.

6 Whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after ten

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brew text has *Geruth-Chemoham*, of which place nothing is known. The Masorites, upon the authority of some Jewish tradition, which appears also in the Targ., have inserted in the Kri *Geruth-Chimham*, the Khan or Carivanserai of Chimham, son of the rich Barzillai, 2 S. xix. 37, 38. The substitution is incapable now of proof or disproof, but Blunt, 'Scriptural Coincidences,' Pt. II. 13, has shewn that it is possibly right. This hospice Jonathan now uses as his headquarters, till the flight into Egypt could be arranged.

CHAP. XLII. 1. *Then all the captains*] Among those delivered by Johanan from Ishmael had been Jeremiah and Baruch, ch. xliii. 6, and to them now the captains and the people, *from the least unto the greatest, i.e.* without exception, come for counsel in their present difficulty.

Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah] He is called Azariah the son of Hoshaiah in ch. xliii. 2. The LXX. in both places call him Azariah the son of Maaseiah, but the Syr. in both places Jezaniah the son of Hosea. The Vulg. and Targ. vary the names as in the Hebrew text. As there is little reason for identifying him with Jezaniah the Maachathite of ch. xl. 8, it is probable that the LXX. are right in calling him in both places Azariah, and that the reading Jezaniah arose from some scribe assuming that his name must be found in the earlier list.

2. *Let...our supplication be accepted*] *Let it fall*, see note on ch. xxxvi. 7.

4. *I have heard*] *i.e.* I obey, assent, see chs. xxxiv. 10, xxxv. 17.

5. *a true and faithful witness*] Lit. *a witness of truth and truthful.* The repetition of a word from the same root gives emphasis to the oath.

between us] **Against us**, as in *v.* 19 marg. Cp. Deut. xxxi. 28.

according to all things] Lit. *according to the whole word as to which Jehovah thy God shall send thee to us.*

6. *we*] The form used here occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, but is the regular form of the pronoun in the Talmud. It is one out of many instances of Jeremiah using the popular instead of the literary language of his times.

7. *after ten days*] On previous occasions we find Jeremiah when consulted answering at once, chs. xxi. 3, xxxvii. 6, xxxviii. 17. There had, however, been a similar delay interposed between the insult offered the prophet by Hananiah, and the word that came from Jehovah to avenge him, ch. xxviii. 12. Hitzig and Graf think that during this interval Jerem-

days, that the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah.

8 Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest,

9 And said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him;

10 If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you, and not pluck *you* up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you.

11 Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I *am* with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand.

12 And I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

13 ¶ But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God,

14 Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell:

15 And now therefore hear the word of the LORD, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;

16 Then it shall come to pass, *that* the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, †shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

† Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

17 †So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and none of them shall

† Heb. *So shall all the men be.*

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iah was collecting information and making up his mind. But this is to turn him into a wise politician instead of an inspired prophet. More probably the delay was granted by God in order to free the minds of the people from the panic caused by the murder of Gedaliah and their fear of Chaldæan vengeance. Jeremiah could have had no doubt that the flight into Egypt was contrary to the tenor of his former prophecies, and he had even declared that Nebuchadnezzar would invade and conquer that country, ch. xlvi. 13. As far as reasoning and deduction went he might have answered at once, but he did not speak from general convictions, and therefore waited till the answer was revealed unto him.

9. *to present*] *To cause to fall*, see above, *v.* 2.

10. *If ye will still abide*] Though the Hebrew form is irregular there can be little doubt that this is the right translation.

I repent me] As the threatened punishment had been inflicted, the divine justice was now satisfied, and the people had nothing more to fear.

12. *I will shew mercies unto you*] **I will give you compassion** before the king of Babylon, *and he shall have mercy upon you, and let you dwell upon your own soil.* On the phrase *giving compassion*, *i.e.* obtaining pity from any one, or making another pity him, see Gen. xliii. 14; 1 K. viii. 50.

cause you to return to] See Note at end of Chapter.

14. *we shall see no war*] Though Egypt had lost the battle of Carchemish, yet it had not been the scene itself of military operations, while Judæa, from the date of the battle of Megiddo, had perpetually been exposed to the actual horrors of war. It was natural therefore to contrast the peaceful prosperity of Egypt with the wasted fields of Palestine. But really Judæa's troubles were now over, while those of Egypt were just about to begin.

15. *to enter...and go*] The verb is the same in both places. *If ye thoroughly determine to go into Egypt, and actually go thither.*

16, 17. *Then it shall come to pass...*] Translate, *Then* **shall** *the sword of which ye are afraid* **reach** *you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine whereof ye pine shall cleave close unto you in Egypt, and there shall ye die;* **and** *all the men who have set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there* **shall die** *by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence,* **nor shall they have** *any one that is left or escaped from the evil which I will bring upon them.* For the fulfilment see note on ch. vi. 9.

remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

18 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

19 ¶ The LORD hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have [†]admonished you this day.

[†] Heb. *testified against you.*

20 For [‡]ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do *it*.

[‡] Or, *ye have used deceit against your souls.*

21 And *now* I have this day declared *it* to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor *any thing* for the which he hath sent me unto you.

22 Now therefore know certainly that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go *and* to sojourn.

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18. *an execration...*] The words in the Hebrew are the same as in ch. xxix. 18, except that in the third place instead of *a hissing* we have a noun signifying **contempt**, or ignominy, less correctly rendered in the A. V. *a curse*.

19. *The* LORD *hath said*, **spoken**, *concerning you*] The request made in *v.* 3 has been fulfilled: Jehovah has spoken. The prophet now adds these four verses as a sort of epilogue, in which he urges upon them the several points of the divine message. In the ten days which had intervened between the request and the answer Jeremiah had become aware that neither princes nor people were prepared to obey unless the answer was in accordance with their own wishes. He does therefore his best to convince them, but as usual it was his lot to speak the truth to wilful men and gain no hearing.

I have admonished you] Lit. *I have called to witness against you*, an abbreviation of the formula in Deut. iv. 26, xxx. 19. It answers more nearly to our phrase *to protest*.

20. *For ye dissembled in your hearts*] There are two ways of translating these words, the first, *For ye have led yourselves astray, i.e.* your sending me to ask counsel of God was an act of self-delusion. You felt so sure that God would direct you to go into Egypt, that now that He has spoken the contrary, you are unable to reconcile yourselves to it. Ewald, with the Syr., Targ., and Vulg., defends this rendering, which gives the verb its proper meaning, but has a difficulty in the preposition *in*, the Hebrew being lit. *in your own selves*. On this account Hitzig, Keil, &c., translate, *For ye err at the risk of your own souls, i.e.* your lives. This gives its proper force to the prep., but mistranslates the verb. The first rendering gives by far the best explanation of their conduct.

22. *to go* and *to sojourn*] **To go to sojourn** (marg.). The second verb expresses the purpose for which they went down into Egypt. Cp. ch. xliii. 2.

NOTE on CHAP. XLII. 12.

The reading of the Syr., Vulg., and Aq. is *will cause to dwell*. The LXX. alone agree with the Hebrew, having ἐπιστρέψω ὑμᾶς. As the change requires no alteration in the consonants, but only in one vowel, and as the vowels are not of primary authority, we may accept the reading of the Vulg., &c., as probably right. The LXX. and the Masorites may have been led to their view by the preposition *to*, but Jeremiah so constantly exchanges this with the prep. *upon* (see chs. xxiii. 8, xxv. 5, xxxv. 15, &c.) that no weight is to be attached to it. On the other hand in *v.* 13 not only the versions, but the Hebrew and the LXX., who have καθίσωμεν, all read *we will dwell*, and the construction evidently requires the same verb in both places.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1 *Johanan, discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carrieth Jeremiah and others into Egypt.* 8 *Jeremiah prophesieth by a type the conquest of Egypt by the Babylonians.*

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, *even* all these words,

2 Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

3 But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.

5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah;

6 *Even* men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to Tahpanhes.

8 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 Take great stones in thine hand,

CHAP. XLIII. 2. *Azariah*] See note on ch. xlii. 1.

the proud men] See note on Ps. cxix. 21, 51, and that on *presumptuous*, ib. xix. 13; the word in the Hebr. being the same.

3. *Baruch...setteth thee on*] These captains belonged to the party who had all along resisted Jeremiah's counsels, and led Zedekiah astray. Now however that events had proved that the prophet's counsels had been wise and true, and his choosing to remain with Gedaliah had shewn how patriotic he was, and ready to refuse the rewards he might have had at Babylon to share the lot of his countrymen, they cannot for shame find fault with Jeremiah himself, but are just as determined as ever to act upon their own views. They assume therefore that had he been left to himself he would have approved of their policy. But he is under the influence, they say, of Baruch, and he is a traitor, who has sold himself to the Chaldæans, and seeks only the hurt of the people.

4. *all the people*] Many, nevertheless, would be unwilling agents, compelled to do what their unscrupulous leaders forced upon the community.

5. *all the remnant of Judah, that were returned*] Cp. ch. xl. 11, 12. In this way the utter depopulation of the land was completed. Under Gedaliah's fostering care these fugitives would have dwelt in safety, and soon increased in numbers and wealth. And as soon as it had become generally known that there was in Judæa a thriving community, not regarded with disfavour by the Chaldæans, other exiles would have joined their company. But the first small beginnings of such a state of things were now swept away, and as even the semblance of government ceased to exist when the captains went down into Egypt, the last chance of the Jews in Palestine perished. Thus was fulfilled the prediction spoken in ch. xxiv. 8—10, and the sole hope of the nation now centred in the exiles at Babylon, see ib. *vv.* 5—7.

6. *men, and women, and children*] See on ch. xli. 16.

7. *Tahpanhes*] See note on ch. ii. 16.

8. *the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes*] On arriving at the frontiers of Egypt, the captains would be compelled to halt in order to obtain the king's permission to enter his country, where probably they would be provided for by being enrolled among his mercenaries. Jeremiah therefore takes the opportunity of this delay to predict, first, the downfall of Egypt, which should be as powerless in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar as is the cloak which the shepherd wraps around him; and secondly, that of the false gods, against whom also Nebuchadnezzar is Jehovah's servant to execute vengeance. The purport of

and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which *is* at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah;

10 And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

11 And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, *and deliver* [a]such *as are* for death to death; and such *as are* for captivity to captivity; and such *as are* for the sword to the sword.

12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace.

13 He shall break also the [†]images

[a] chap. 15. 2. Zech. 11. 9.

[†] Heb. *statues*, or, *standing images*.

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the prophecy is unmistakeable, but the manner in which it was declared has many difficulties, as will be seen in the following notes.

9. *brickkiln*] Possibly, *a pavement of brick*. See Note at end of Chapter. Jeremiah was to take a few large stones, such, nevertheless, as he could carry in his hand, and build with them, in the propylæa before the royal palace, something that would serve to represent the dais upon which the seat of kings was usually placed. By hiding them in the clay is meant plaistering them over with mortar. The sight of the prophet busy with stones and mortar in such a place would attract the attention of all the Jews, and when they had gathered round him, and demanded the meaning of such strange conduct, and their curiosity was fully aroused, he would set before them God's Word.

10. *my servant*] See on ch. xxv. 9.

that I have hid] *i.e.* that I have embedded in the mortar by the instrumentality of my prophet.

his royal pavilion] *His pavilion*, or rather, *canopy*. This rendering has the authority of the Targ. and Rashi, who give *tent*, and the verb properly means to stretch out a tent. But the noun occurs only here, and is so rare that the Masorites have altered the spelling to bring it into conformity with the usual modes of writing Hebrew nouns. It can scarcely mean therefore an ordinary tent, but is the parasol held over kings, of which Prof. Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' I. 495, says, "In peace the parasol-bearer is always represented as in attendance upon the Assyrian kings, except in hunting expeditions, or where he is replaced by a fan-bearer. The parasol, which exactly resembled that still in use throughout the East, was reserved exclusively for the monarch. It had a tall and thick pole, which the bearer grasped with both his hands, and in the early times a somewhat small circular top. Under the later kings the size of the head was considerably enlarged, and at the same time a curtain or flap was attached, which, falling from the edge of the parasol, more effectually protected the monarch from the sun's rays." Hitzig endeavours from the Arabic to shew that the word means the hide of leather, upon which those about to be executed knelt to receive the headsman's blow, and in which their bodies were then carried away. Two months before at Riblah, many prisoners had been thus despatched in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar; but such execution would be not upon or over, but before the throne. Keil renders a *glittering ornament*, and explains it of tapestry, with which the seat of the throne was covered. But there is nothing either in the versions or in the numerous thrones delineated in the monuments of Assyria and Babylon to justify this supposition.

11. *And when...*] Translate, *And he shall come and smite the land of Egypt: that which is for death to death, and that which is for captivity to captivity, and that which is for the sword to the sword.* According to each man's destiny he will either die of famine, pestilence, or in battle; or he will be led captive; or be put to death by the executioner. See ch. xv. 2.

12. *I will kindle*] Or, *he shall kindle*. So the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. This agrees better with the next verb, *he shall burn*, and requires only the transposition of one letter in the Hebrew (הצית for הצתי).

he shall burn them, and carry them away captives] *i.e.* he shall burn the temples, and carry away the gods, many of which were of precious materials.

and he shall array] Many critics offended at the magnificence of this metaphor have attempted to give it a more feeble meaning, but in vain. The A. V., however, diminishes its beauty by translating the verb *array* in the second place by the prosaic *putteth on*. Lit. it is, *And he shall wrap himself in the land of Egypt as the shepherd wrappeth himself in his cloak, and shall go forth thence in peace, i.e.* With as great ease as a shepherd throws his cloak round him when going forth to watch

of [1]Beth-shemesh, that *is* in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

[1] Or, *the house of the sun.*

his flock by night in the open field, so easily shall the king of Babylon take possession of all the wealth and glory of Egypt, and throw it round him, and depart without anyone daring to resist his progress (Ewald).

13. *the images*] The word is more correctly rendered *pillar* in Isai. xix. 19, where it is explained in the note as meaning an obelisk. Such there can be little doubt is its meaning here.

Beth-shemesh] *i.e.* the house of the Sun, better known to us by its Greek name Heliopolis, was famous for its obelisks, several of which are now at Rome, that in the Vatican having been brought thither by Caligula. There still however remains there *in situ* one described by Stanley as "the oldest in Egypt, and therefore the oldest in the world." It is covered with hieroglyphics intaglio'd into the granite, of the most ancient or picture type, with no approach to phonetic characters. The antiquity and beauty of these obelisks, so unlike everything in their own country, must have greatly impressed the Jews, and hence the reference to them here. The Egyptian name for Beth-shemesh was On, for which see note on Gen. xli. 45, and Smith's 'Bibl. Dict.'

NOTE on CHAP. XLIII. 9.

The word מלבן occurs thrice in Scripture, and in each case is rendered in the A. V. *brick-kiln*, but our translators did not mean thereby a place in which bricks are burnt, but one simply in which they are made. For this latter sense there is ample justification in the versions, for the former none. In 2 S. xii. 31, though not the reading of the C'tib, Syr., or Targ., it is a probable correction of the Masorites, and has the support of the LXX., who render *πλινθίον*, and of the Vulg., which has "typus laterum," *a mould for making bricks*. Probably, however, it was some erection of brickwork, through which the conquered Ammonites had to pass. In Nahum iii. 14 this is all but certainly its meaning. Nineveh is commanded to prepare for a siege, and among other things, she is to *strengthen her brick-work*. This is the exposition of the Targ., but the other versions understand the words of forming or shaping bricks, an interpretation not to be altogether set aside, as it follows naturally upon the previous injunction to *tread the clay*. It must also be granted that the Hebr. מלבן, like the Syr. ܡܠܒܢܐ (by which it is rendered in Jer. xliii. 9, and which is also the right reading here in Nahum instead of the unmeaning ܡܩܒܠܢܐ), and the Ar. ملبن mean properly the brick-shaper, *i.e.* the mould in which bricks are shaped, the *typus laterum* of the Vulg. In this passage of Jeremiah the Vulg. renders a *brick wall*, the Targ. a *building*, the Syr. a *brick mould*, the LXX. the *propylæa*, *ἐν πρόθύροις*, the other Greek versions *πλινθίον*. It is plain from this confusion that the versions were very uncertain as to the meaning. Some therefore have suggested a sense which ملبن has in Arabic, namely, a ressault or projection, but this gives no good sense; nor is anything certain except that the word is derived from a brick or tile, and that the מלבן was situated in the entrance to the royal palace, and was a fit and proper place in which a conquering king would place his throne. Possibly, therefore, it was a pavement of bricks or tiles, and upon it Jeremiah was to place *large stones*, yet not so very large, inasmuch as he was to carry them thither *in his hand*, and cover them over with mortar, rendered in the A. V. *hide them in the clay*. In fact, Jeremiah was to build a low dais, upon which the conqueror's seat might be placed, while over him would be held a canopy, called in the A. V. *his royal pavilion*, *v.* 10. We have an exact picture of the whole in Layard's 'Mon. of Nin.' pl. 59. The king is seated upon a chair placed on a dais raised about fifteen inches from the ground, while a eunuch stands behind him holding over his head a canopy or umbrella. From the smoothness of the dais it seems, like Jeremiah's, to have been made of stones, plaistered completely over. The objection that Jeremiah would not have been allowed to build such a dais in the entrance to a royal palace is futile. From the most ancient times to the present day things entirely abhorrent to our methodical ways are permitted in the East, and the more strange the act the less likely is it to be interfered with, because it is looked upon as to a certain extent inspired. Thus insane people are seldom restrained, it being supposed that the Deity directly influences those who are incapable of controlling themselves. In the case of Jeremiah there would be his reputation as an inspired man to protect him, and his conduct would entirely harmonize with oriental views.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1 Jeremiah expresseth the desolation of Judah for their idolatry. 11 He prophesieth their destruction, who commit idolatry in Egypt. 15 The obstinacy of the Jews. 20 Jeremiah threateneth them for the same, 29 and for a sign prophesieth the destruction of Egypt.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they *are* a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein,

3 Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, *and* to serve other gods, whom they knew not, *neither* they, ye, nor your fathers.

4 Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.

6 Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted *and* desolate, as at this day.

7 Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of

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CHAP. XLIV. We have in this chapter the record of Jeremiah's last prophecy. In noble consistency with that unbending determination to do his duty, which had marked his whole life, and undeterred by the recent violence of the Jews, who had dragged him into Egypt against his will, we find him boldly rebuking their tendencies to idolatry, which seem to have grown only the stronger in their tribulation. The address was evidently made to them at some festival, and though the Jews lived in the hope of being able soon to return to Judæa, yet we find that they had spread over the whole land, representatives of their communities having come to Pathros not only from Migdol and Tahpanhes, but even from Noph. Untaught by chastisement they clung more closely than ever to their superstitions, and even ascribed their former prosperity to the benign influence of the Queen of Heaven. Jeremiah therefore earnestly expostulates with them, admonishing them that the present desolation of Judæa was really the result of their past idolatry, *vv.* 2—7, and assuring them that continuance therein would bring only ruin and destruction upon themselves, *vv.* 8—14. They reply that the worship of the Queen of Heaven had flourished in their happiest times, *vv.* 15—19, whereupon Jeremiah shews that the lasting misery of their land was the true result of that worship, *vv.* 20—23, and predicts that trouble and distress would still be their lot in Egypt unless they repented, *vv.* 24—28. As a proof finally of the truth of his words he foretells that Pharaoh-Hophra should be delivered into the hands of his enemies, and die a violent death, *vv.* 29, 30.

1. *Migdol*] Not the village upon the Red Sea (Exod. xiv. 2), but the frontier town Magdolum, a strong fortress, twelve Roman miles from Pelusium, on the northern boundary of Egypt.

For *Tahpanhes* and *Noph* see ch. ii. 16, and for *Pathros* see note on Pathrusim, Gen. x. 14, and cp. Isai. xi. 11.

8. *in that they went to burn incense, and to serve*] Or, by going *to burn incense to serve* thereby *other gods*. The Hebr. lit. is *to go to burn incense to serve*, but this multiplication of infinitives is contrary to the usage of our language. The A.V. is also incorrect in inserting *and*, because the burning incense is the service of the strange gods here condemned.

4. *Howbeit I sent*] And *I sent*.
rising early and sending them] Cp. ch. vii. 25.

6. *was poured forth*] See ch. xlii. 18.
as at this day] See ch. xi. 5.

7—9. In the five previous verses Jeremiah had appealed to their own experience of the evil results of their former sins, and having thus prepared the way he puts his appeal in the form of two questions. In the first, *vv.* 7, 8, he asks, why they commit a second time sins which have already brought upon them such unhappy consequences, and then, as such conduct seemed too irrational to be capable of defence, he demands in the second place, *v.* 9, whether they could have forgotten the past history of their nation, when they were thus so untaught in its great lessons.

Israel; Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, †out of Judah, to leave you none to remain;

† Heb. *out of the midst of Judah.*

8 In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?

† Heb. *wickednesses*, or, *punishments*, &c.

9 Have ye forgotten the †wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem?

† Heb. *contrite.*

10 They are not †humbled *even* unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, [a]I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah.

[a] Amos 9. 4.

12 And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, *and* fall in the land of Egypt; they shall *even* be consumed by the sword *and* by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.

13 For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:

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7. *against your souls*] *i.e.* against your own selves. They would have to bear themselves the result of the evil they were committing, cp. ch. xxvi. 19.

8. *that ye might cut yourselves off*] Rather, *to cut off from you* man and woman, supplying the object from the previous verse. Hitzig defends the rendering of the A. V., but it can scarcely be right to translate the same words in two consecutive verses in two different ways.

9. *the wickedness of their wives*] The Hebrew says, *the wickedness of his wives*. As no satisfactory meaning has been suggested for the pronoun being in the sing., many critics, with Ewald and Graf, accept the reading of the LXX., *the wickedness of your princes*, confirmed by the mention of the princes in *vv.* 17, 21. A copyist might easily substitute *his wives* from having in his mind the words which immediately follow. Keil and Nägelsb. defend the present reading, but give no satisfactory explanation. Though the worship of the Queen of Heaven was peculiarly a feminine idolatry, yet it was not the sole heathen worship of which the Jews had been guilty, and "the kings, the princes, the people," and finally "their wives," is a summary enumeration of all classes, by whose united persistence in sin the ruin of their country had been consummated.

10. *They are not humbled*] Or, **made contrite**, lit. *broken*, Job xxii. 9; Isai. xix. 10, or *crushed*, ib. liii. 5, where the A. V. has *bruised*. The prophet changes from the second to the third person, because this obduracy was no new feature in the conduct of the Jews, but their fathers and their kings had shewn themselves equally disobedient to the divine law. There is here no reservation as in ch. iv. 27, but the reverse.

11. *all Judah*] *i.e.* all Judah in Egypt, yet even there with exceptions, see *vv.* 14, 28, while Judah in Babylon was entirely exempt from this denunciation. It is itself a repetition of what the prophet had declared in ch. xlii. 15—18; but though their idolatry was a fresh provocation of the divine justice, it was but a continuance of the same habit of mind which had made them disobey the command given there, *vv.* 20—22, and therefore no new punishment is threatened. Their sin did but make the punishment of which they had been warned before more certain and inevitable.

12. *and they shall all be consumed*] There is great force in the accumulated repetition here of the same thought. Lit. translated the words are:—

They shall all come to an end;
In the land of Egypt they shall fall;
By sword, by famine they shall come to an end;
From the least even to the greatest by sword and by famine they shall die.

14 So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they † have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape.

† Heb. *lift up their soul.*

15 ¶ Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

16 *As for* the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee.

17 But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our

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14. *So that none of the remnant...*] Lit. *And there shall not be to the remnant of Judah, which are* **going** *to sojourn there in the land of Egypt, one that escapes or remains*, &c. The former word means one who slips away, saves himself by a stealthy flight, Gen. xiv. 13, the latter one who survives when all the rest perish, Job xviii. 19. This explains the meaning of the last clause of the verse, which as it is put in the A. V. is a truism. What the prophet says is that of all those now going down to Egypt none shall return to Judæa except a few miserable fugitives, who shall steal away as men who flee in battle, 2 S. xix. 3. There still remains a verbal contradiction with the opening clause, which says that the remnant should have no one to escape; but broad statements of Holy Scripture are often thus qualified afterwards, and these fugitives were too few in number and too dishonourable in their way of escape to be a real exception. Note, however, that Jeremiah's denunciation is confined, first, to those now *going*, not as the A. V. renders it, *which are gone* into Egypt; and, secondly, to those who intend to sojourn there only temporarily, and who therefore *are lifting up their souls to return to Judæa to dwell there.* See on this phrase ch. xxii. 27. For many years Jewish settlers had gone to Egypt in great numbers, and of course they would have their full share of the miseries of the Chaldæan invasion, but the new comers would suffer more severely, partly as being gathered chiefly in the border-towns, and partly from their want of means. The old settlers, moreover, would be treated in the same way as the Egyptians, but these fugitives, with no knowledge of the Egyptian language or ways, would have no friends in the country to aid them, and would also be recognized by the Chaldæans as inveterate enemies, and mercilessly slain.

15. *the men which knew that their wives had burned incense*] Rather, *that their wives* **burned** *incense.* It was not something past, but a thing still going on. It seems plain moreover that this appeal of the prophet was made at a public festival held somewhere in Pathros, *i.e.* Upper Egypt: for the women are assembled not in *a great multitude*, but in a great *kahal*, or congregation (see ch. xxvi. 9), here formed for religious purposes. Except for such a ceremony Jewish manners would not have allowed the women to be abroad in crowds. The men are privy to it: they know what their wives are doing, but take no direct share in the proceedings. As the women then advance in regular procession to worship the moon-goddess, in accordance as it seems with a vow (*v.* 17), Jeremiah meets them, makes the procession halt upon its way, and pronounces in Jehovah's name words of solemn warning. The people do not deny that it is Jehovah's word (*v.* 16), but assert that the favour of the Queen of Heaven is more efficacious than that of Jehovah. It was thus an open revolt against God, and shews that the people were imbued with that most debasing idea of polytheism, which made idolaters not deny the existence of other gods, but regard them as so many powerful beings, each with his own limited sphere of action, among whom they might take their choice, 1 K. xx. 23, 28. Jehovah's protection, they argue, had been of little use to them; the Queen of Heaven, if not more powerful, was at least more kind.

all the people that dwelt...] Not all in person, but by deputy. All the settlers in Egypt were formally putting themselves under the Queen of Heaven's protection: and the reply to Jeremiah's expostulation was made by the heads of the congregation.

17. *whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth*] **The whole** *word* (or *thing*) **which hath gone forth** *out of our mouth*, that is, the vows we have made. The A. V. makes the answer to be a profession of general wilfulness: the Hebr. means that they would not let Jeremiah's expostulations prevent the carrying out of the special object which had brought them together. The phrase used is the ordinary expression for a vow, Num. xxx. 2, 12; Deut. xxiii. 23; Judg. xi. 36. The answer therefore has not the sense put upon it in the A. V. But for the vow they would have listened to the prophet: but they have bound themselves to the Queen of Heaven, and unless they do what they have promised, she will be offended, and will avenge herself. In support of their determination they bring forward two arguments; the first, that this

own mouth, to burn incense unto the ‖ Or, *frame of heaven.* [b] queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have [b] chap. 7. 18. done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: † Heb. *bread.* for *then* had we plenty of † victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

18 But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

[c] chap. 7. 18. 19 [c] And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, ‖ Or, *husbands?* without our ‖ men?

20 ¶ Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying,

21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it *not* into his mind?

22 So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day.

23 Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in

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homage was customary. It had been paid by their ancestors with the approbation of their kings and princes universally and publicly, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem. Secondly, it had led to no bad results but the contrary. The times when this homage had been most general had been times of abundance and prosperity. For the wrong rendering in the marg., see note on ch. vii. 18.

18. *since we left off...*] The suppression of this popular idolatry had apparently been regarded with much ill-will in Josiah's time, and many may even have ascribed to it his defeat at Megiddo. Probably Jehoiakim had again permitted it, but Zedekiah, during the miseries of his reign, had forbidden it, and by the usual fallacy of regarding the immediate antecedent as the cause of an event, the people ascribed the fall of Jerusalem to the neglect of their favourite goddess. The real but more remote cause of the ruin of the nation was, that it had rejected the call to repentance made to it first in Hezekiah's time, and subsequently by Josiah.

19. *to worship her*] Rather, *to represent her image.* The verb only occurs in this conj. once besides in Holy Scripture, in Ps. lxxviii. 40, where it means *to grieve*, a sense which does not suit the present place. In another conjugation, however, it is used in Job x. 8, of *making, forming*, and so probably it means here that the cakes were made in the shape of a crescent to represent the moon. See for these cakes ch. vii. 18.

without our men] *i. e.* **our husbands** (margin). The vows of women were not binding without the consent of their husbands, Num. xxx. 7, 8. Though the participles *burning incense* and *pouring* are masc., it is plain that the speech is that of the women, and what they mean is that they had the authority of their husbands for what they were doing, and that Jeremiah must leave them alone, and discuss the matter with those who alone had the right to interfere.

21. *did not the LORD remember them*] *Them* does not mean *your fathers*, &c., but all the various acts of idolatry involved in burning incense to an image. The pl. has a similarly intensive force in the words *obey my voice and do them*, in ch. xi. 4.

came it not *into his mind*] The *not* is a necessary part of the clause, being placed in the Hebr. at the beginning of the verse, the whole of which it qualifies, being lit. *was it not the burning incense...these things Jehovah remembered, and it came up upon his heart.* The simple affirmative thus takes the place of the interrogative in the two concluding clauses, but in English the *not* must be inserted in both.

22. *could no longer bear*] The prophet corrects in these words the error of their argument in *v.* 17. They had looked only to the immediate antecedent, but God is long-suffering, and thus His own attributes require patience on His part, and therefore punishment follows slowly upon sin. When chastisement comes men must not be content with examining the immediate past, but must make a more searching inquiry, and they will then find that sin long persisted in has been that which the divine justice *could no longer bear.*

his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.

24 Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt:

25 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows.

26 Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth.

27 Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them.

28 Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, † mine, or theirs.

† Heb. *from me, or from them.*

29 ¶ And this *shall be* a sign unto

24—30. Earnest as was the preceding expostulation, Jeremiah sees that it has produced no effect. Possibly they pressed upon him, and with threatening gestures bade him stand aside. Many cared little perhaps for the Queen of Heaven, but they would not have their festival disturbed. He therefore utters his last warning, shews them the bitter consequence of their sin, and then withdraws. And with this last resistance to the sins of a debased and godless people, unavailing as had seemed all his previous efforts, his earthly ministry closed.

25. *and fulfilled with your hand*] · **Your hands.** Their vow at first sight might seem only in the course of fulfilment, and not fulfilled; but when Jeremiah said these words he pointed to their hands, in which they were carrying the crescent-shaped cakes which they had vowed to the goddess. Their idolatry therefore was not a mere matter of the lips, but was an accomplished deed, as the symbols held in their hands testified.

ye will surely accomplish] Or, *Ye shall then certainly accomplish your vows;* but the force of this would be given in our language by the imper., *Accomplish then your vows.* It is not a prediction, but is ironical, and means that as they will take no warning, they must needs have their way.

26. *my name shall no more be named...*] As this is Jehovah's final sentence, it is introduced by a formal oath in which God swears by His own great name that He will be their national God no longer. The words do not mean as Keil and Nägelsb. suppose that there would be no Jews in Egypt, but something far more solemn. Jehovah repudiates His covenant relation towards them. Henceforth they may no more say *By the life of my Lord Jehovah*, because He has rejected them, and the right therefore to use His name has been forfeited. See note on ch. iv. 2.

27. *I will watch*] **I am watching** *over them*, not for good, but for evil. Upon this verb see ch. i. 12, and also ch. v. 6, where it is used of the panther lying in wait at the gates of the cities ready to spring upon incautious passengers.

shall be consumed] This is the result of Jehovah's repudiation of the covenant. When He was their God He watched over them for good: now not only is His protection withdrawn, but He is their enemy, because of the wickedness whereby their rejection was made necessary. On the extermination of the Jews in Egypt, see Note at end of Chapter.

28. *Yet a small number...*] Lit. *And fugitives from the sword* (see on *v.* 14) *shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, men of number, i. e.* so few that they can be counted: *and all the remnant of Judah that* **are going**, &c. So much more unendurable shall be their sufferings in Egypt than their present misery, that the men now abandoning Judæa in the hope of finding an asylum there shall be glad to return like runaways from a lost battle.

whose words...] *Whose* **word** *shall stand, from me or from them.* It refers not to God's words generally, but to the one prediction, that their descent into Egypt would be their ruin, and to their denial of it.

29, 30. *And this* shall be *a sign...*] In proof of his words Jeremiah gives them a sign

you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil:

30 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

in the person of Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt. He came to the throne the year before Jerusalem was captured, and possibly it was the death of his predecessor Psammuthis, who is not mentioned in the Bible, which led to the retreat of the Egyptian army which had marched to the relief of Jerusalem, ch. xxxvii. 7. In Herodotus Hophra is called Apries, and is described as a very prosperous monarch until, having been defeated by the people of Cyrene, a suspicion arose that he had betrayed his native troops in order to establish a tyranny by means of his mercenaries. A mutiny followed, and when Amasis, who had been sent to treat with them, put himself at the head of the Egyptians, a battle was fought in which the Greek mercenaries were defeated, and Hophra taken prisoner. After treating him kindly for some years, Amasis finally gave him up to his enemies, by whom he was strangled, Herod. II. 161, 169. The words thus came literally true. See notes on chs. xxxvii. 5, xlvi. 21.

As Apries reigned nineteen years, and the Jewish exiles had but lately arrived in Egypt, *vv.* 8, 12, 14, 28, Hitzig and Graf reject these two verses as an interpolation, asserting that the fulfilment is so exact as to be plainly a *vaticinium ex eventu*, while at the same time it was too remote to be a sign to those to whom Jeremiah was speaking. But a sign need not necessarily be immediate. Jeremiah's contemporaries had had their sign that the prophet's words were true in the fulfilment of all that he had said about Jerusalem. God does not force His signs upon the impenitent; for this would make human probation impossible. Years afterwards Jeremiah's sign would influence for good many who were not so entirely hardened as those now before him. Still there is something of exaggeration in the statements of these critics. Hophra had been two years now upon the throne, and it is not correct to say that the sign was not fulfilled for seventeen years more. Its fulfilment began when Amasis took Hophra prisoner, and this, according to Mr Bosanquet in Mr G. Smith's 'Hist. Assurbanipal,' p. 339, was only six or seven years after this time. He calculates that Hophra spent more than ten years as a prisoner in his palace at Saïs.

NOTE on CHAP. XLIV. 27.

As regards the fulfilment of this prophecy of extermination against the Jews who had sought an asylum in Egypt, we have already shewn in the note on ch. vi. 9, that the colonists there of the Jewish race belonged to times subsequent to those of Jeremiah. Nägelsb. doubts this view, and asks whence came the numerous Jews whom Alexander found in Egypt. They were, he answers, the descendants of those who settled there in Jeremiah's time: and he therefore concludes that they abandoned all idolatrous practices, and rivalled their brethren at Babylon in their aversion to heathenism. But as Keil shews there is no proof that Alexander did find many Jews in Egypt: all that Josephus ('Antiq.' XI. 8. 5) says is that he had Jewish soldiers in his army. It is certain that his newly founded city of Alexandria soon attracted to it large numbers of Jewish settlers, allured by the promise of equal privileges there with the Greeks (Jos. 'de Bel. Jud.' II. 18. 7); but the main proportion of even these came in the days of his successor Ptolemy I. ('Antiq.' XII. 1). He it was who made Alexandria the headquarters of the Jews of the dispersion, and the place where they first came in contact with the philosophy and ideas of Greece. In the year B.C. 320, he subdued Phœnicia and Cœle-Syria, and having captured Jerusalem by a stratagem on the sabbath-day, he took great numbers of captives, not only from it but also from the hill-country of Judæa, and the places round about Jerusalem, and from Samaria, and removed them to Egypt. And having found them to be men very faithful to their oaths, he entrusted most of his fortresses to their charge, and at Alexandria gave them equal rights with the Macedonians. And not a few of the rest of the Jews migrated thither, partly because of the fertility of the soil, and partly to enjoy the king's liberality (Jos. 'Antiq.' XII. 1). It is only after this time that we read of the Jews dwelling in Egypt in such numbers that Ptolemy Philadelphus set free on one occasion more than one hundred thousand Jewish slaves (ib. XII. 2. 3).

CHAPTER XLV.

1 *Baruch being dismayed, 4 Jeremiah instructeth and comforteth him.*

THE word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch;

3 Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

4 ¶ Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, *that* which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land.

Baruch's disappointment.

CHAP. XLV. We learn from the superscription that this prophecy belongs to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, immediately after Baruch had written the roll, or even as the words more literally mean while he was writing it. It appears that the long catalogue of calamities so consistently, and during so protracted a period denounced by Jeremiah against his country, made a most painful impression upon Baruch's mind. We gather also from *v.* 5 that he was of an ambitious temperament, and being of noble birth as the grandson of Maaseiah, the governor of Jerusalem in Josiah's time, 2 Chro. xxxiv. 8, and a scribe, he appears to have looked forward to high office, either in the state, or far more probably to the being invested with prophetic powers. With such expectations it is not surprising that the certainty of the near ruin of his country overwhelmed him with despair. It is remarkable that oriental traditions represent Baruch as so offended at the denial to him of the gift of prophecy, and at the hard fate of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple, that he apostatized from Judaism, and adopted the tenets of Zoroaster, with whom indeed they often identify him (see my 'Cat. Cod. Syr. Bibl. Bodl.' 421, 456). Though not deserving of implicit credit, these traditions nevertheless had their origin in Baruch's character, and it is noticeable that while several apocryphal books falsely bear his name, as of a man who stood on the very threshold of prophecy, yet that Holy Scripture denies him all title to the prophetic office. Further, this address is as much a reproof as a consolation. It tells Baruch to give up his ambitious hopes and projects, and be content with escaping with life only. There is not a word of praise for his steady attachment to his master: and though, after the capture of Jerusalem and the dangers incurred in Egypt, Baruch would estimate more correctly the high privilege of having been Jeremiah's friend and partner, yet while full of great expectations, and in the heat of youth, twenty years before Jerusalem was captured, so modest a rôle might seem humbling and unworthy of him. And so, like the prophecy of the seventy years of exile, it would become a prediction of good only after many troubles had been undergone and pride was quelled. However great then might be his personal services, God's prophet had no honeyed words of flattery for his faithful minister, but only the bare and unseductive message of truth. Finally, as regards the place of this prophecy it would come in order of time next to ch. xxxvi., but as that was a public, and this a private prophecy, they would not be written upon the same roll. When then the last memorials of Jeremiah's life were added to the history of the fall of Jerusalem, Baruch attached to them this prediction, which probably had always been in his own keeping: and humbled now by years, and the weight of public and private calamity, he must have read it with very different feelings from those which filled his mind, when in his youth its words came to him to rebuke his ambition and frustrate his plans. See Introd. p. 321.

1. *these words*] *i.e.* the words in Jehoiakim's roll.

3. *grief to my sorrow*] Baruch's sorrow is caused by the sinfulness of the Jewish nation, to which God adds grief by shewing how severely it will be punished.

I fainted in my sighing] Quoted from Ps. vi. 6, where the verb is better translated *I am weary*, worn out, and exhausted with my sighing, so that as I lie upon my couch my sleep fails me, *and I find no rest.*

4. *break down...pluck up*] These are the words rendered *throw down* and *root out* in ch. i. 10. That which God has builded He *throws down* (or tears in pieces), and that which He has planted He *roots out.*

even this whole land] Or, *and the whole earth is it.* Baruch's lot was cast in one of those troublous times when God enters into judgment with all flesh, *v.* 5. It was not Judæa only but the whole known world that was thrown into turmoil by Nebuchadnezzar's energy, ch. xxv. 26. And therefore the ambiguous word *'retz* should be translated, not *land*, which confines the meaning to Judæa, but *earth*, *i.e.* the world.

5 And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek *them* not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I [a] give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

[a] chap. 39. 18.

CHAPTER XLVI.

1 Jeremiah prophesieth the overthrow of Pharaoh's army at Euphrates, 13 and the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar. 27 He comforteth Jacob in their chastisement.

THE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles;

2 Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of

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5. *And seekest thou great things for thyself?*] At such a time, when the elect can scarcely be saved, Matt. xxiv. 22, no man ought to cherish plans of private success. Life is all that even the most fortunate can hope to rescue, and God promises this to Baruch, wherever he may go: yet not as his own, but as a *prey*, a thing snatched from danger, and saved by prompt energy in the midst of the general ruin, ch. xxi. 9, xxxviii. 2, xxxix. 18.

PROPHECIES AGAINST THE NATIONS.

First Division.

CHAPS. XLVI.—XLIX. Upon the prophecies concerning Israel follow those against foreign nations, collected according to prophetic custom into one roll, cp. Isai. xiii.—xxiii.; Ezek. xxv.—xxxii. They are arranged in two great divisions, first chs. xlvi.—xlix. 33, spoken in connection with ch. xxv., and secondly, chs. l. li. spoken at a subsequent date against Babylon. In the first group are prophecies against Egypt (supplemented by a second prophecy of a later date), Phœnicia, Moab, Ammon, the Syrians, and the Arabs on the Euphrates, nations already enumerated in ch. xxv. 19—25; while chs. l. li. carry into detail the denunciation against the king of Sheshach contained there in *v.* 26. Between these is placed a prophecy against Elam, ch. xlix. 34—39, spoken in the first year of Zedekiah. The seven earlier prophecies belonging to the fourth year of Jehoiakim were written, as Ewald and Graf have shewn from internal evidence, at the same time, and arranged as they at present stand, which is in fact their natural order. With Egypt the prophet begins, because her defeat at Carchemish was the indispensable condition of that supremacy of the Chaldæan empire, by which these states were to be punished. Upon Egypt borders Philistia. Then crossing over to the Dead Sea, Jeremiah takes Moab and Ammon, two kindred states whose history is perpetually connected with that of Israel; and then Edom, which stood in a similar relation to Judah, and had even been subject to it as Moab had been to the sister kingdom. Finally, he includes the more distant tribes, till the whole country from the Nile to the Euphrates is comprehended in one view. It is no doubt intentional that these prophecies against the nations are in number seven: for so Amos prefaces his denunciation against Israel by seven prophecies against other lands, Amos i. 3—ii. 3. Ezekiel also arranges his prophecies in a similar way, though to make the number seven he separates first Tyre and then Sidon from Philistia, while here all three are included in one prediction. The more important points in the internal criticism of these chapters will be pointed out each in its proper place.

CHAP. XLVI. Against Egypt. This prophecy naturally holds the first place (see above), and consists of two parts, the first a song of triumph because of her defeat at Carchemish, *vv.* 3—12, the second, a prediction that the conqueror would not rest satisfied with his victory, but would invade her territories, and waste them from one end of Egypt to the other, *vv.* 14—28. The song of triumph is expressly said to have been composed after the battle of Carchemish in the fourth year of Jehoiakim: the date of the latter prediction is uncertain, but as a new heading is inserted at *v.* 13, it is reasonable to conclude that some delay intervened, and possibly a long one. In the one Jeremiah gives utterance to the feelings of exultation stirred up in his heart when the glad news of Necho's defeat sounded through the streets of Jerusalem, and the evil day of Megiddo was avenged: and at some subsequent time the word of Jehovah again came to him, bidding him declare the judgments still hanging over the Egyptian land.

1. *against the Gentiles*] Or, *concerning the nations*. This superscription belongs to the seven prophecies contained in chs. xlvi.—xlix. 33.

2. *Against Egypt...*] To *Egypt*, *i.e.* relating to Egypt, *concerning the army*, &c. So *to Moab*, ch. xlviii. 1; *to the Ammonites*, xlix. 1, &c. We should use *of*, or *concerning*, see note on *v.* 13.

Pharaoh-necho] See note on 2 K. xxiii. 29.

Carchemish] Prof. Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' II. 475, says that not only was this place not identical with Circesium, at the junction of the Chebar with the Euphrates, but that there never was much ground for the identification. He places it higher up the river in lat. 36°, and

Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

3 Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with *your* helmets; furbish the spears, *and* put on the brigandines.

5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed *and* turned away back? and their mighty ones are †beaten down, and are †fled apace, and look not back: *for* fear *was* round about, saith the LORD.

† Heb. *broken in pieces.*

† Heb. *fled a flight.*

6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates.

7 Who *is* this *that* cometh up as a

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describes it as the key of Syria on the east, and as commanding the ordinary passage of the Euphrates. It was, he adds, the only great city in that quarter.

3. *Order ye...*] *i.e. prepare ye, make ready.* The *buckler* was a small round target carried by the light-armed troops: the *shield* belonged to the heavy-armed troops, and was large enough to protect the whole body. These, as the flower of the army, are commanded to advance to the attack.

The attack and repulse are twice told. First, in *vv.* 3—6, we have their magnificent equipment, their bold onset, their sudden defeat briefly set forth: and then in *vv.* 7—12 we have it described as a mighty rising of the whole land of Egypt with its dependent nations: but Jehovah the God of Hosts meets them, and executes upon them His righteous judgment.

4. *Harness the horses*] From the infantry the prophet proceeds to the chariots, in which the Egyptians placed great confidence.

get up, ye horsemen] As the word also signifies *riding-horses*, 1 K. iv. 26, x. 26; Ezek. xxvii. 14; Joel ii. 4, Keil and Nägelsb. translate *mount the steeds.* This is probably the right rendering, though the word may mean horses for chariots, as many render it in Isai. xxi. 7. The A. V. usually translates the word *horsemen.*

stand forth with your *helmets*] *i.e. stand* in your ranks *with helmets on.* It was not usual for soldiers in ancient times to wear their heavy armour except when fighting. The order therefore to *stand with helmets on* signified that the battle was at hand. The same is implied in the command to *furbish, i.e.* polish and sharpen, *their spears.*

put on the brigandines] In old times *brigand* meant a soldier, and we still call a division of an army a brigade, and its commander a brigadier, *i.e.* a brigandier, or captain of brigands. Similarly a brigandine means a soldier's equipment, and is put here for a *coat of mail*, the meaning of the Heb. word.

5. *Wherefore have I seen them*] The first words are an interjection of astonishment, lit. *Why have I seen? They are terror-stricken!*

they are giving way back! The moment seized by the prophet is that when the Egyptian host first feels that the battle is lost, and overborne by the enemy loses heart, and in despair, yet not without a struggle, gives way. It is remarkable, that while Jeremiah in his warnings addressed to Jerusalem uses the most simple and unadorned language, on the contrary his poems concerning the gentile nations are full of brilliant poetry. Nothing could be more masterly than the contrast drawn here in a few vigorous touches between the mustering of the army to battle, when the heart of every warrior, long used to victory, was beating high with manly purpose and firm resolve: and their dismay when overpowered they begin to fall back.

their mighty ones are beaten down] Or, **broken in pieces** (marg.). In ancient battles victory depended very much upon the prowess of certain champions, such as David's worthies, 2 S. xxiii. 8—39. When these were crushed the meaner mass of combatants at once gave way.

and look not back] *And* **turn** *not back.* They make no halt, and no attempt to rally.

for *fear* was *round about*] The prophet's watchword, Magor-missabib, see ch. vi. 25.

6. *Let not...*] Though the particle used here would express a wish in prose, it constantly in poetry is a simple negative, cp. Job xx. 17. The verse therefore should be translated *The swift shall not flee away, and the hero shall not escape: in the north on the bank of the river Euphrates they shall stumble and fall.*

the north] See *v.* 10. Carchemish in lat. 36° would be four degrees north of Jerusalem in lat. 32°.

7. *Who* is *this...*] In the first strophe we saw only a mighty army marshalling for battle, and its hasty flight. In this second strophe the prophet tells us at whose defeat we have been present.

as a flood] *As the* **Nile**; see note on *yeor*, the word used here, in Gen. xli. 1. The metaphor describing the advance of the Egyptian army is naturally drawn from the annual overflow of their own sacred stream at the approach of the summer solstice.

flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers?

8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, and *his* waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, *and* will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof.

9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; †the Ethiopians and †the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle *and* bend the bow.

10 For this *is* the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

11 Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; *for* †thou shalt not be cured.

12 The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, *and* they are fallen both together.

13 ¶ The word that the LORD

† Heb. *Cush.*
† Heb. *Put.*
† Heb. *no cure* shall be *unto thee.*

whose waters are moved...] Lit. **his waters toss to and fro** *as the rivers*, the natural branches of the Nile in Lower Egypt, see note on Exod. vii. 19, where it is rendered in the A.V. *streams.*

8. *the city...*] Though sing. in the Hebr., yet as being put without an article it is used collectively, of cities in general, *I will destroy cities.*

9. *Come up*] Rather, *Go up*, **advance**, *ye horses; and* **drive furiously** (cp. 2 K. ix. 20; Nahum ii. 4), *ye chariots; and let the mighty men* **go** *forth.* The word refers to their marching out of Egypt, arranged in three divisions, cavalry, chariots, and infantry, to begin the campaign.

the Ethiopians] Though the soldiers formed one of the chief Egyptian castes, they do not seem to have been men of much physical strength, and from the time of Psammetichus the armies of Egypt were composed chiefly of mercenaries. We find here *Cush* the Nubian negro, and *Phut* the Libyans of Mauritania, which two races supply the heavy-armed soldiers, men who handle the shield (see *v.* 3); and *Ludim*, the Hamite Lydians of North Africa (see note on Gen. x. 13), a weaker race, *who handle, who string the bow*, i.e. who serve as light-armed troops. For a similar description of the armies of Egypt, see Ezek. xxx. 5; where also, ch. xxvii. 10, Lud and Phut are mentioned among the mercenaries who served at Tyre.

10. *For...*] Rather, **But that** *day belongeth to the* LORD *Jehovah of hosts.* They march forth in haughty confidence, *but that day*, the day to which they are looking forward in proud hope of victory, is Jehovah's day, a day on which they will be the victims sacrificed in His honour, to avenge Josiah's slaughter, and the deposition of Jehoahaz, and Jehoiakim's intrusion upon the throne.

the sword...] Lit. *the sword shall eat and be satisfied, and be drunk with their blood.* Cp. ch. ii. 30.

in the north country] This explains *v.* 6, where we have seen that the words are literally true of Carchemish.

11. *balm*] *i.e.* **balsam**, the usual remedy for wounds, ch. viii. 22.

in vain shalt...] Or, *in vain* **hast thou multiplied** *medicines:* **healing-plaister** *hast thou none.* See ch. xxx. 13. So utter is the defeat that all Egypt must stir itself for the relief of the wounded, but in vain. No balsam, no medicines, no bandages shall avail to heal the blow.

12. *thy cry hath filled the land*] **The earth**, see on ch. xlv. 4. It is not merely Egypt, but, as the mention of *the nations* in the first clause proves, the world, that rings with the cry of grief.

the mighty man...against the mighty] *Against the mighty* **man**, *i.e.* one mighty man against another. In the confusion of the defeat the largeness of the army only increases the bloodshed: for the champions hired at great cost to fight Egypt's battle get in one another's way, and so are overtaken and slaughtered together.

13. *The word*] A new prophecy commences here, foretelling the successful invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, and it has been appended to the hymn of triumph in the previous twelve verses, because they both relate to the same kingdom. Similarly Ezekiel, whose prophecies are arranged with the utmost care, gathers together in chaps. xxx—xxxii. predictions against Egypt of many various dates. Graf indeed regards this superscription as an interpolation, arguing that *vv.* 14—28 are part of the same prophecy as *vv.* 1—12, but the hymn is complete in itself, and though without the victory at Carchemish Nebuchadnezzar would never

spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come *and* smite the land of Egypt.

14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee.

15 Why are thy valiant *men* swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them.

16 He †made many to fall, yea, one fell upon another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword.

† Heb. *multiplied the faller.*

17 They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.

18 *As* I live, saith the King, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor *is* among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so* shall he come.

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have invaded Egypt, yet a long interval elapsed before the invasion took place; for according to Ezek. xxix. 19, it was delayed till after his protracted siege of Tyre. The hymn too was certainly written at Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim: but this prophecy was more probably spoken in Egypt to warn the Jews there, that the country which they were so obstinately determined to make their refuge would share the fate of their native land. The allusions to the idolatries of Egypt seem to shew that Jeremiah's spirit had been stirred by the degrading superstitions which he saw practised around him; while the concluding words encourage the people to hope for a return of God's mercy, as being still in covenant with Him.

how...should come] Or, **concerning the coming** *of Nebuchadnezzar*. Lit. *to*, equivalent to our *of the coming*, see note on *v.* 2.

14. *Declare ye*] For a similar summons to prepare for war, see ch. iv. 5. For the towns mentioned, which were on the extreme limits north and south of Egypt, see ch. xliv. 1.

Stand fast] *i.e.* in your ranks. See on *v.* 4.

the sword shall devour] *The sword* **hath devoured** *those round about thee.* One after another the nations have been consumed by the conquering arms of Nebuchadnezzar, and now at length Tyre, which so long had withstood him, has fallen, and his forces inured to hardship are about to fall upon Egypt, that they may be recompensed by its rich booty for their long privations. Hence the summons to arrange themselves in their ranks, and *prepare* for battle, by putting on their armour.

15. *Why are thy valiant* men] The sing. is probably the right reading, and the verse should be translated *Why is thy mighty one cast down? He stood not, because Jehovah thrust him down.* The mighty one is explained by the LXX. of the bull Apis, and we should thus have (1) the chief deity of Egypt, *v.* 15: (2) the army of mercenaries, *v.* 16: (3) the king, Pharaoh, *v.* 17, the three including all upon whom the Egyptians trusted. See Note at end of Chapter.

16. *He made many to fall*] Lit. *He hath multiplied the stumbler, i.e.* Jehovah hath made many **to stumble**. In the hurry of their flight they get in one another's way, stumble *and fall one upon another.*

Arise, and let us go again, or **return**, *to our own people*] The Egyptian army being composed of mercenaries, has no patriotic feeling, and immediately that the battle is lost, they propose to one another to abandon the country which has hired them, and return each to his native land. In this there is one of those minute touches which so often occur in Holy Scripture as evidences of its truth. In the very short history of Apries, *i.e.* Hophra, in Herodotus, we learn that his strength consisted in mercenaries, and that his favouritism towards them was finally the cause of his ruin. See ch. xliv. 30 and above, *v.* 9.

the oppressing sword] See note on *the oppressor*, ch. xxv. 38.

17. *They did cry there*] It is difficult to see why the mercenaries on their return to their country should call out in this way, and against the rules of language to make, with Keil and Nägelsb., those who thus cried out any other than the mercenaries. But all is easy if, with the versions, we read '*shem*' *name* for '*sham*' *there*, and translate, *They have called* (or, *Call ye*) *the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt A noise: he hath overstepped the appointed time.* For this custom of giving prophetic names see ch. xx. 3; Isai. viii. 3, &c. The name in Hebrew being equivalent to the reality, it means that Pharaoh is a mere empty sound, and that he has allowed those allotted years of prosperity, which, as Herodotus testifies, he enjoyed at the beginning of his reign, to pass by, and, having misused them, nothing now remains but his ruin. See Note at end of Chapter.

18. *Surely as Tabor* is *among the mountains*] The *is* is inserted wrongly, as the point of comparison is not to the fact of Tabor be-

19 O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, †furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant.

20 Egypt *is like* a very fair heifer, *but* destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north.

21 Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like †fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visitation.

22 The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.

† Heb. *make thee instruments of captivity.*

† Heb. *bullocks of the stall.*

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ing among the mountains, but to its great and noble elevation. God swears by Himself, Heb. vi. 13, enforcing the oath by His great name in opposition to the name given to Pharaoh, *v.* 17, *Verily he shall come like a Tabor among the mountains, and like a Carmel by the sea.* Tabor is described by Robinson, 'Res.' III. 211, as rising in the form of a truncated cone to the height of about 1,350 feet above the plain of Esdraelon, its total height above the sea-level being 1,805 feet. Other mountains of equal elevation are in sight, but its shape and the wide extent of the plain around it make it a far more conspicuous object. Similarly Carmel, though absolutely not so high as Tabor, is yet a most commanding mountain, because it rises from the edge of the wide expanse of the Mediterranean.

19. *O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt*] Lit. *O thou inhabitant daughter of Egypt.* A similar phrase occurs in Zech. ii. 7, *O Zion, deliver thyself, inhabitant daughter of Babel,* whence some have argued that the Jews in Egypt were here addressed. More probably *daughter of Egypt* is equivalent here to Egypt itself. Similarly, though *daughter of Zion* properly means the people of Zion, ch. iv. 31; Isai. xxxvii. 22, lii. 2, yet not unfrequently it is used for Zion itself, ch. vi. 2; Ps. ix. 14; Isai. i. 8, x. 32, xvi. 1, &c. The phrase therefore may simply mean, *O thou inhabitant of Egypt,* and the word *inhabitant* is fem., because it is used collectively of the whole population.

furnish thyself to go into captivity] This is the right sense, but lit. it is *make for thee vessels of banishment,* probably meaning not merely the packages necessary for containing such goods and baggage as they might be able to take with them, but their outfit generally.

for Noph, i.e. Napata, *shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant*] Cp. ch. ii. 15, where the Hebrew of the last clause is the same, though the word for *desolate* is there rendered *burned.*

20. *Egypt* is like *a very fair heifer* **Egypt is** *a very fair heifer.* Her god was the steer Apis, *v.* 15, and she is the spouse.

but *destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north*] More probably *a gadfly from the north has come upon her.* Cp. the fly and the bee in Isai. vii. 18, and see Note at end of Chapter.

21. *Also her hired men* are *in the midst of her like...*] Rather, *Also her hirelings in the midst of her* **are** *like calves of the stall.* As pointed out by Graf, we again have here one of those minute historical touches, which only accurate personal knowledge can give. In the hymn of triumph the mercenaries of Egypt were Nubians, Moors, and Lydians, *v.* 9. They were destroyed at the battle of Carchemish, and the armies of Egypt were no longer recruited from those races. Their place was taken by hirelings from Asia Minor, Carians, and Ionians, whom Hophra took into his pay to the number of 30,000 men (Herod. II. 163). These he settled *in the midst* of Egypt, in the fertile lands above Bubastis, in the Delta, where, well paid and fed and with great privileges, they became as *calves of the stall.* So pampered were they that Hophra would not expose them to the risks of the war with Cyrene, but sent native soldiers instead. As we have seen, it was their mutiny that cost Hophra his crown; see note on ch. xliv. 30. But his successor Amasis did not venture to lessen their privileges, and finally even entrusted to them his person, Herod. II. 154.

for they also are turned back] Lit. *for they also have turned the back, they flee together, they stand not: for the day of their destruction is come upon them, the time of their visitation.* This, which is the original arrangement of the verse, is much more expressive of their total rout than the less exact rendering of the A. V. It also wrongly inserts *and* before *the time of their visitation.* For this is not something additional, but the explanation of the foregoing words. It is the day of their destruction, because it is the time when God visits them to punish them for their sins.

22. *The voice thereof shall go like a serpent*] **Her voice,** *i.e.* the voice of Egypt. But the word has a much wider usage in Hebrew than with us. Thus it is used in Lev. xxvi. 36, of the sound made by a falling leaf; in 2 S. v. 24, of a rustling among the trees; and in 1 K. xviii. 41, of the splashing of rain. Here it probably means the busy sound of life and activity in the towns of Egypt, the trampling of her hosts, and the turmoil of camp

23 They shall cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers, and *are* innumerable.

24 The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north.

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the ‖ multitude of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him:

‖ Or, *nourisher.* † Heb. *Amon.*

26 And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD.

27 ¶ [a]But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make *him* afraid.

[a] Isai. 41. 13. & 43. 5. & 44. 2. chap. 30. 10.

28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am*

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and city. All this at the approach of the Chaldæan army shall depart, as the snake disturbed by the woodcutters in its haunts flees with a rapid gliding motion to hide itself far away in remote marshes.

for they shall march with an army] More lit. *for they shall advance with might.*

with axes] It is evident that the comparison of the Chaldæan warriors to woodcutters arose from their being armed with axes, representations of which may be seen in Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' I. 459. As the Israelites did not use the battle-axe, their imagination would be the more forcibly struck by this weapon as carried by some of the races which served in the Assyrian armies.

23. *They shall cut down...*] Or, *They* **have cut down** *her forest, saith Jehovah; for it is impenetrable, i.e.* just as a pathless forest must be cleared, because agriculture and the passage to and fro of men are impossible until it is destroyed, so must the false worship and the material prosperity of Egypt be overthrown.

grasshoppers] The gryllus gregarius, rendered 'locust' in Exod. x. 4, 13. Vast as is this impenetrable forest, yet the invading host advances as multitudinous as the locusts which consume the whole vegetation of the land on which they alight.

24. *The daughter, i.e.* the inhabitants, *of Egypt shall be confounded*] *Shall be* **disgraced**, *brought to shame.*

25. *the multitude of No*] Rather, **Amon of No**, better known to us as Ammon or Jupiter-Ammon. Lenormant, 'Manuel,' I. 532, says of him, "He was the first of the supreme triad of Thebes, and confessedly his form was the most elevated and spiritual under which the Egyptian priesthood represented the divinity to the adoration of the people. He was the deity invisible and unfathomable, whose name signifies *the concealed*, and was the mysterious mainspring, who created, preserves, and governs the world." *No*, called in Nahum iii. 8 marg. *No-Amon*, is the sacred city of Thebes, the capital of Upper Egypt. Cp. Ezek. xxx. 14—16. First then Jehovah's anger falls upon the representatives of the highest divine and human powers, Amon of No and Pharaoh. It next punishes Egypt generally, *and* **her** *gods and* **her** *kings:* for each city had its special divinity, and by Egypt's kings are meant the inferior rulers of the several parts of the country. Others interpret it less probably of the whole lineage of the Egyptian kings. Finally Pharaoh is again mentioned, with *all who trust in him, i.e.* the Jews, who so perversely for many generations had made Egypt their confidence and not God.

26. *afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old*] This is probably the right meaning. The invasion of Nebuchadnezzar is to be a passing calamity, the severity of which will be felt chiefly by the Jews, but no subjugation of Egypt is to be attempted, and after the Chaldæan army has withdrawn, laden with spoils, Ezek. xxix. 19, things will resume their former course. A less probable interpretation is put upon it by Hitzig, Graf, &c., after Kimchi. As the Hebrew lit. is, *it shall dwell as in the former days:* they translate, *it shall stay at home, be quiet.* Its power shall be so broken that it shall no more interfere with the politics of foreign nations. But the previous centuries of peace, of which they speak, are not confirmed by historical records, for Egypt always appears as an aggressive power.

27, 28. These two verses are a repetition of ch. xxx. 10, 11 (where see note), but with those slight variations which Jeremiah always makes when quoting himself. As they are more closely connected with the subject in ch. xxx., it is probable that, so far from this being the original text, as Hitzig argued, they

with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I [1] not leave thee wholly unpunished.

[b] chap. 10. 24. & 30. 11.

[1] Or, *not utterly cut thee off.*

are repeated here to remind the Jews of the whole purport of that prophecy. For they are not out of place. Egypt's fall and restoration have been foretold; but the prophet closes with a word of exhortation to the many erring Jews who dwelt there. With loving earnestness he reminds them in it of Israel's hope, and of the promise of salvation to mankind bound up with their national existence. He calls back to their remembrance the prediction from which these two verses are taken, and thereby assures them of their return from exile, and of the certain accomplishment by their means of God's purposes of mercy to the whole human race. Why then should they flee from their country, and trust in a heathen power, instead of endeavouring to live in a manner worthy of the noble destiny which was their true glory and ground of confidence?

NOTES on CHAP. XLVI. 15, 17, 20.

15. Literally this verse is *Why is thy valiants cast down? He stood not, because Jehovah thrust him down.* Now though there would be little difficulty in Hebr. in a sing. verb preceding a pl. nom., it is different when a verb and a pronoun each in the sing. follow a nom. pl. But instead of *thy valiants*, more than fifty MSS., some early editions, the LXX., the Vulg., and also Aq., Sym., and Theod., all have the sing., the last three rendering ὁ δυνατός σου, and the Vulg. *fortis tuus.* Moreover the LXX. not only have ὁ μόσχος ὁ ἐκλεκτός σου, but explain it ὁ Ἄπις, *thy i.e.* Egypt's *chosen steer*, the bull Apis. But this reference to the great Egyptian symbol of deity being in course of time not understood, scribes changed the Hebr. word into the plural, supposing it to refer to the heroes in the army. Elsewhere, however, the word is used by Jeremiah in the pl. usually of chargers, war-horses, ch. viii. 16, xlvii. 3, l. 11 (marg.); but we often in other books of Scripture find it employed of bulls, Ps. xxii. 12, l. 13, lxviii. 30; Isai. xxxiv. 7. Properly, however, it means *strong ones*, and is often used of heroes, and even by Jeremiah himself in Lam. i. 15. So God is called *the strong one of Jacob*, Gen. xlix. 24, or of Israel, Isai. i. 24. Here *the strong one* of Egypt is the bull Apis, the personification of Phtah, the creator; and though his worship had its head-quarters at Memphis, yet it was by no means a local religion, but the discovery and death of the bull were matters of interest to the whole land (see Lenormant, 'Manuel,' I. 535). Him then Jehovah *casts down*. He cannot stand because Jehovah *thrusts* him *down*. Jehovah thus appears as his personal antagonist, and the verb implies a fierce struggle, see Num. xxxv. 20; Isai. xxii. 19; Ezek. xxxiv. 21.

17. The LXX. translate this verse, *Call ye the name of Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt Saon Esbir* (so many MSS. for Esbi or Esbei) *Emoed;* the Syr. *They have called there the name of Pharaoh the Lame, king of Egypt, Disturber and Passer of Times;* and the Vulg. *Call ye the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt Time hath brought Tumult.* All three therefore read שָׁם for שֵׁם, though the Syr. seems to have had both words; next, the Vulg. and LXX. took the verb as the imper. קִרְאוּ, and not as the indic. קָרְאוּ; finally all agree in taking the three last words as a prophetic name of Pharaoh. As the consonants in both cases are the same, there can be little hesitation in accepting the reading of the versions, as their united authority is certainly greater than that of the Masorites, who added the vowels to our Hebrew text; and the imper. of the LXX. and Vulg. is also to be preferred to the indic. of the Masorites and Syr., because the false reading *there* made the indic. necessary. If confirmation were needed, we have it in *v.* 18, where, contrasted with Pharaoh's name, is that of another king, Jehovah Tsebaoth. The translation, however, of the name is disputed. Ewald renders it, *A noise which a moment drives away, i.e.* all the bustle of his royal state should come to an end suddenly, as was the case, ch. xliv. 30. Also in the second word *He'bir* (the whole title being *Saon He'bir Hammo'ed*) he sees a play upon his name, called Apries by Herodotus, and Hophra in the Bible, but in Egyptian *Ouahprahet.* But interesting as is this explanation, the passage referred to by him in proof that מוֹעֵד means a *moment*, Judg. xx. 38 (see marg.), does not bear him out. It means there as ever a fixed, appointed time. The rendering which gives each word its usual signification is that of the foot-note.

20. The word rendered *destruction* does not occur elsewhere, and is variously translated. Gesenius, Umbreit, &c. support the rendering of the A. V., but, as Graf remarks, it is not probable that so rare a word should have so commonplace a signification. The Vulg. renders *stimulator, a goader*, evidently a guess, taken from the comparison of Egypt to a heifer.

And so Aq. and Sym. ἐγκεντρίζων, which the Syro-Hex. renders *a stinger, i.e.* a stinging *insect*. The Peshito-Syr. confesses its ignorance of the word, by rendering it *an army*, which of course is what is really intended: and so *destruction* as the result of a successful invasion is the prosaic sense gathered from the context, and not from the etymology. The LXX. have ἀπόσπασμα, *a torn-off shred*, which, however absurd it may seem, is yet of value as keeping to the meaning of the root, which signifies *to grip*, or pinch. Schultens, in his 'Origg. Hebr.,' renders, *the bite of the pinching gadfly*, but Hitzig and others, with the approval of Roediger in his additions to Ges. 'Thes.' p. 111., understand it of the *gadfly* itself, a sense taken from the meaning of the root קרס, *to sting*, in the Arabic. This is confirmed by a remarkable note quoted by Mr Field in his edition of the 'Hexapla' of Origen, Vol. II. 708, from St Chrysostom, in the Catena Ghislerii, II. 824, as follows:—"The Hebrew text offers us a plainer sense: for instead of *A shred shall come from the north upon her*, it has *A gadfly shall come upon thee.* This is a sort of insect which stings oxen and drives them to madness. Having compared then Egypt to a heifer,...he has likened the Babylonian to a gadfly." Ewald renders Wallfisch, *a whale*, but this comes from קרש, an entirely distinct root: nor does one see what a whale has to do with a heifer.

Instead of the reduplicated בָּא בָּא, *has come, has come*, which the translators of the A. V. found so unendurable that without any authority they have broken up the sentence to escape from it, the versions and Targ. all read בָּא בָּה. So slight a change, in reading inappreciable, upon so high authority is to be admitted.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The destruction of the Philistines.

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against

CHAP. XLVII. The prophecy against Philistia was one of those contained in Jehoiakim's roll, but there are many difficulties connected with the superscription, owing to our ignorance of contemporaneous history. The note of time *before that Pharaoh smote Gaza* must have been added after it was written, probably when Jeremiah inserted ch. xlvi. 13—28, which as we have seen was composed long after the hymn of triumph in *vv.* 3—12. But when did Pharaoh conquer Gaza? And which Pharaoh? Now Herodotus (II. 159) tells us that Necho defeated the Syrians at Magdolum, and captured Cadytis, a great city of Syria. And in Book III. 5 he adds that Cadytis was as large as Sardis. Hitzig and most foreign scholars identify Magdolum with Megiddo, and Cadytis with Gaza. But the former was probably a mere mistake. Herodotus had never heard of Megiddo, and easily confounded Μαγδωλόν and Μαγεδδών, as he heard them from the mouths of his informants, the Egyptian priests. Cadytis is almost certainly Jerusalem; for in the Aramaic dialect it was called *Cadushta*, the holy city, and we have no grounds for applying this epithet to Gaza. Moreover Herodotus tells us that "Necho offered to Apollo the dress which he happened to have worn at both these successes," which thus must have been contemporaneous, whereas those scholars who identify Cadytis with Gaza, place the conquest of this town four years later, when Necho was retreating from his defeat at Carchemish; and it is not very probable that a king wore the same clothes for four years, and went on two expeditions in them. In Herod. III. 5 Gaza at first sight seems to suit the passage best, but the chief editors of Herodotus decide that Cadytis there also is Jerusalem, see Baehr. 'Excurs.' XI. ad Her. II. 159 in Vol. I. p. 922 of his edition. Putting then these notices of Herod. aside as too uncertain in their interpretation to be depended upon, we think it probable that though defeated at Carchemish, yet Necho was able to seize this place upon his retreat, when obviously the possession of so strong a fortress would be most useful to him to prevent the entrance of the victorious Chaldæans into Egypt. Thus the words *before that Pharaoh smote Gaza* fix the time within a few weeks. Though after the battle of Carchemish it was before the capture of Gaza. The wasting of Philistia, as appears from internal evidence, was connected with the siege of Tyre, *v.* 4, and not, as many have thought, with that of Gaza, even though we grant that as Nebuchadnezzar had shortly after his defeat of the Egyptians to return hastily to Babylon, because of his father's death, Necho may have been detained some little time before it, and even have waited there to obtain reinforcements from Egypt to repair his losses. Keil, however, conjectures that the Pharaoh may have been Hophra, and that he may have conquered Gaza in the expedition, mentioned by Herod. II. 161, against Sidon and Tyre, while Rashi, on the authority of the 'Seder Olam,' says it took place in the tenth year of Zedekiah, when the Egyptians endeavoured to relieve Jerusalem. But neither of these conjectures is probable. The note of time to be of any use must be something that closely followed the writing of the prophecy.

1. *against the Philistines*] **Concerning....** See ch. xlvi. 1.

the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote † Gaza.

† Heb. *Azzah.*

2 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and † all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.

* Isai. 8. 7.

† Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

3 At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong *horses*, at the rushing of his chariots, *and at* the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to *their* children for feebleness of hands;

4 Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, *and* to cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of † the country of Caphtor.

† Heb. *the isle.*

5 Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is cut off *with* the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself?

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2. *waters rise up*] This metaphor is also used in ch. xlvi. 8 for the assembling of an army. Cp. Isai. viii. 7.

out of the north] The Chaldæan army must cross the Euphrates at Carchemish, on the position of which see ch. xlvi. 6.

an overflowing flood] Or, *torrent*, see Isai. xxx. 28, where the phrase is rendered *an overflowing stream*, and ib. lxvi. 12, where it is simply *a flowing stream*. See note also ib. lvii. 5; Lam. ii. 18. To understand the metaphors of the Bible we must keep the natural phenomena of the country clearly in mind. Our rivers flow, summer and winter, with nearly equable course, varied by an occasional flood. In Palestine they are torrents, dashing furiously along in the rainy seasons, and dry, or nearly so, in the summer.

the land, and all that is therein] *The land and* **the fulness thereof** (marg.). See Isai. xxxiv. 1. The literal rendering must be retained because of the contrast between the wealth of Egypt, which forms its fulness, and the inhabitants, who are mentioned in the next clause.

3. *his strong* horses] Always when used in the plural this word in Jeremiah means *war-horses*, *chargers*, ch. viii. 16. For its use in the sing. see Note on ch. xlvi. 15.

the rushing of his chariots] Rather, **the rattling**, the crashing noise which they make as they advance.

rumbling] See Note on ch. iii. 23.

for feebleness of hands] So utterly unnerved are the Philistines at the mere noise made by the approach of the Chaldæan army, that they flee in such panic that a father would not even turn round to see whether his sons were effecting their escape or not.

4. *Because of the day that cometh to spoil*] Lit. *Because of the day that has come, i.e. Because* **the day has come** *to devastate all the Philistines.* Cp. ch. xlvi. 10.

to cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth] The Philistines are called Tyre's remaining (*i.e.* last) helper, because all besides who could have assisted her against the Chaldæans have already succumbed to their power. This verse shews that the judgment upon Philistia was in connection with that upon Tyre, and its fulfilment no doubt was by expeditions sent out under his lieutenants by Nebuchadnezzar to ravage the country and supply his main army with provisions and fodder.

the remnant of the country of Caphtor] *The remnant of the* **coastland** *of Caphtor.* The word also means as in the marg. *an isle.* Apparently, however, the Philistines came from the coast of the Egyptian Delta, see note on Gen. x. 14. They are called a remnant because they had been greatly reduced in numbers, partly by the long war of Psammetichus against Ashdod, Herod. II. 157, partly by the capture of Gaza, *v.* 1, and partly by Assyrian invasions under Sennacherib and Esar-haddon.

5. *Baldness...*] The shearing of the hair was a mark of extreme mourning, see ch. xvi. 6.

Ashkelon is cut off] As the former clause represents Gaza as cutting off her hair, so this probably means *Ashkelon is speechless* through grief. So the Vulg. and Sym., but the LXX., Syr., and Aquila, agree with the A. V. Either rendering is tenable.

the remnant of their valley] Probably the low-lying plain, usually called the Shefêlah, which formed the territory of the Philistines. The A. V. has inserted the word *with*, but if the present punctuation be retained, *remnant of their valley* is in apposition with Ashkelon. The hesitation of our translators at this was not unreasonable, and probably the punctuation is wrong, and the proper arrangement of the clause is, *O remnant of their valley, how long wilt thou cut thyself? Their valley* is that of Gaza and Ashkelon. This gives a sufficiently good sense; but the reading of the LXX. is remarkable, *the remnant of the Anakim*, which probably would mean Gath, the home of giants, 1 S. xvii. 4; 1 Chro. xx. 5—8. Gesenius, Hitzig, and Graf consider the LXX. to be right, and it must be conceded that if ever the Masoretic text is uncertain, it is in places like this, where allu-

6 O thou sword of the LORD, how long *will it be* ere thou be quiet? †put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.

† Heb. *gather thyself.*

7 †How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore? there hath he appointed it.

† Heb. *How canst thou?*

CHAPTER XLVIII.

1 *The judgment of Moab,* 7 *for their pride,* 13 *for their security,* 14 *for their carnal confidence,* 26 *and for their contempt of God and his people.* 47 *The restoration of Moab.*

AGAINST Moab thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Woe unto Nebo! for it is spoiled: Kiriathaim is confounded *and* taken: ‖Misgab is confounded and dismayed.

‖ Or, *the high place.*

2 *There shall be* no more praise of Moab: in Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation. Also thou shalt ‖be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall †pursue thee.

‖ Or, *be brought to silence.* † Heb. *go after thee.*

3 A voice of crying *shall be* from

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sions are made, which in process of time had become unintelligible. But changes are not to be permitted unless absolutely necessary.

6. *O thou sword...*] Or, **Alas**, *sword of Jehovah, how long wilt thou not rest?* To this, in *v.* 7, the prophet replies, *How can it rest*, till its work is done? The marg. renders, *How canst thou rest?* but the third person is probably right, and the ambiguity has arisen from Jeremiah having used the Aramaic instead of the Hebrew form, as is not unusual with him.

CHAP. XLVIII. This prophecy is an amplification of Isai. xv., xvi., and as it also introduces two verses, 43, 44, from Isai. xxiv. 17, 18, its criticism is a matter of grave importance. For the argument in proof of the assertion that the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah were written at the end of the exile at Babylon, requires also the proof that Isai. chs. xxiv.—xxvii. are of an equally late date. While then Gesenius, in his Com. on Isaiah, contented himself with depreciating this prophecy as a tasteless piece of patchwork, with interpolations by a later hand, Movers and Hitzig have endeavoured to specify the interpolated passages, but with so little agreement that the verses rejected by Hitzig are usually said by Movers to be unmistakeably written in Jeremiah's style. The subject is too large for a note, but while Kueper (on Jer. p. 83 sqq.) has vindicated Jeremiah's introduction of passages from older writers, Graf, as regards the charge of interpolation, says (p. 529), "The passages borrowed from other authors are so inwoven with that which is Jeremiah's own, that we cannot omit them as a later interpolation without destroying the whole; for without them a connected whole there is none. On the other hand in that which is the writer's own, and even in many of the alterations of the borrowed passages, one recognizes so strongly Jeremiah's mode of expression, that one has no resource but to acknowledge the whole to be his."

From Isai. xvi. 13 it has been conjectured that Isaiah had an ancient prophecy before him, and that Jeremiah drew from the same source. Ewald even considers that he kept more closely to the original prediction than Isaiah. Bearing in mind the number of prophetical writings mentioned in the Books of Chronicles which have not come down to us, there is nothing unreasonable in such a supposition. For the parts common to the two prophets cp. Isai. xv. 2—7 with *vv.* 37, 38, 34, 5, 36, and Isai. xvi. 6—12 with *vv.* 29—33, 36, 35. But often the same verse in Isai. is more than once referred to by Jeremiah; thus both *vv.* 3 and 5 were suggested by Isai. xv. 5. A complete analysis of the points of agreement and difference will be found in Graf's able commentary.

1. *Against Moab*] **Concerning** *Moab*, see ch. xlvi. 2.

Nebo ... Kiriathaim] For these cities see note on Num. xxxii. 37, 38.

is confounded] **Is brought to shame.** And so in the next clause.

Misgab] **The high fort.** As it has the definite article it cannot be a proper name, but is a common noun signifying the acropolis or citadel, such as formed the nucleus of most ancient towns. See note on Ps. ix. 9, A. V. *refuge*, as ib. xlvi. 7, xlviii. 3; also ib. xviii. 2, A. V. *high tower;* and ib. lix. 9, A. V. *defence.* As it properly means a citadel, it doubtless refers to some special fortress, probably Kir-haraseth, on which see 2 K. iii. 25 (Graf).

2. There shall be *no more praise of Moab*] Lit. *The glory of Moab is no more, i.e.* Moab has no more cause for boasting.

Heshbon] This town now belonged to the Ammonites, ch. xlix. 3, but was on the border, and is mentioned for the sake of a play upon the name, which cannot be reproduced in English. As the pronoun is fem., lit. *against her*, it means that the enemy encamped in Heshbon on the borders arranges there the plan of his campaign against Moab. Heshbon is masc.

Madmen] As there is again a play of words

Horonaim, spoiling and great destruction.

4 Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

5 For in the going up of Luhith †[a] continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

6 Flee, save your lives, and be like ‖[b] the heath in the wilderness.

7 ¶ For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his [c] priests and his princes together.

8 And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken.

9 Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.

10 Cursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD ‖deceitfully, and cursed

† Heb. *weeping with weeping.*
[a] Isai. 15. 5.
‖ Or, *a naked tree.*
[b] chap. 17. 6.
[c] chap. 49. 3.
‖ Or, *negligently.*

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here, Madmen is probably the name of some town, though not expressly mentioned elsewhere. Possibly, however, an allusion is made to it in Isai. xxv. 10, where see marg. The versions translate *In silence thou shalt be silent*, *i.e.* they take Madmen as an irregular infin. of the verb *to be silent*.

3. *Horonaim*] See Isai. xv. 5. The inserted *shall be* should be omitted, and "spoiling and great destruction," lit. *breaking*, is to be taken as the cry heard from Horonaim.

4. *Moab*] Probably, as Graf thinks, the city elsewhere called Ar-Moab, or simply Ar, *i.e.* city, Num. xxi. 15; Deut. ii. 9, 18, 29. Eusebius, in his 'Onomasticon,' calls it Moab, and Abulfeda, Mâb. Keil, however, prefers understanding by it the country of Moab.

her little ones] A correction of the Masorites, but supported by the Syr., Vulg., and Targ. Less probably Ewald, with a few MSS., and the LXX., *they have made their cry heard unto Zoar*, cp. Isai. xv. 5. The Vulg. is probably right in explaining the *little ones* of the children.

5. *continual weeping shall go up*] Lit. *with weeping shall go up weeping*. In Isai. xv. 5 it is more simply, *with weeping shall one go up to it*. It appears from this place that Luhith was situated upon an eminence, and Jeremiah describes one set of weeping fugitives as pressing close upon another. On the reading *Luhoth* see Note at end of Chapter.

for in the going down of Horonaim] Isaiah has simply *in the way*, but Jeremiah contrasts it with the *ascent of Luhith*, thus shewing that it was situated in a hollow, probably near the Dead Sea.

the enemies] Rather, *in the descent of Horonaim they have heard* **the distresses** *of the cry of breaking*, *i.e.* the cry of distress occasioned by the ruin inflicted by the enemy. Graf objects to the phrase *distresses of the cry* for *cry of distress*, and renders, *scream of the cry of breaking*, but not on tenable grounds. The rendering of the A.V. is that of the Vulg. and Kimchi, but violates the rules of grammar without giving a suitable meaning.

6. *like the heath*] *Like a* **destitute man.** See note on ch. xvii. 6.

7. *in thy works*] As *works* and *treasures* are coupled together, possibly by *works* are meant the products of labour, cp. Exod. xxiii. 16 and 1 S. xxv. 2, where it is used of wealth in cattle. But the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. render *fortifications* (reading perhaps with Ewald, מעוניך), and Dahler *idols*, justifying it by Deut. iv. 28; Ps. cxv. 4.

Chemosh] As the national god of Moab, Num. xxi. 29, he represents the whole land, and his being led into captivity implies the total ruin of those under his protection. His name is spelt here *Chemish*, which, though not occurring elsewhere, is probably correct, as is shewn in Carchemish, *i.e.* the fortress of Chemish, called Carchemosh in the Syr., ch. xlvi. 2. Fürst quotes from Plutarch Kêmis as the second name of Horus.

8. *the valley*] The lowlands on the east bank of the Jordan, and at the top of the Dead Sea.

the plain] *Mishor*, see the account given of it in note on Deut. iv. 43. It was an upland pasture, and answers very much to our *downs*.

9. *wings*] This rendering is probably right, as the word has this sense in Chaldee, and Jeremiah chose it for the sake of a play upon the following words. The LXX., however, render *signs*, the Vulg. and Aq. *a flower*, cp. Job xiv. 2; Ps. ciii. 15, and the Syr. and Targ. *a crown*, probably from its use for the plate upon the high-priest's forehead, Exod. xxviii. 36.

10. *deceitfully*] Better, **negligently** (marg.). The prophet pronounces a curse upon the ministers of the divine justice, if, when sent to destroy Moab, they are remiss in executing the sentence.

be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

11 ¶ Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste [†] remained in him, and his scent is not changed.

12 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles.

13 And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of [d] Beth-el their confidence.

14 ¶ How say ye, We *are* mighty and strong men for the war?

15 Moab is spoiled, and gone up *out of* her cities, and [†] his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter, saith the King, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

16 The calamity of Moab *is* near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast.

17 All ye that are about him, bemoan him; and all ye that know his

[†] Heb. *stood.*

[d] 1 Kin. 12. 29.

[†] Heb. *the choice of.*

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11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth*] *i.e.* Moab from the time it conquered the Emims (Deut. ii. 9, 10), and so became a nation, has retained quiet possession of its land, and enjoyed comparative prosperity. From the Moabite stone we gather, that though long tributary to Israel, yet that even then they were a numerous people, and that king Mesha after the death of Ahab threw off the yoke; nor except for a short time under Jeroboam II. was Israel able to bring them back into subjection. Evidently they gradually drove the Reubenites back, and recovered most of the territory taken from the Amorites by Moses, and which originally had belonged to them.

he hath settled on his lees] Good wine was thought to be the better for being left to stand upon its sediment (Isai. xxv. 6), and in all cases its flavour was rendered thereby stronger (Zeph. i. 12). By being *emptied from vessel to vessel* it lost its bitterness and harshness, and became more bright and transparent, but there was danger of its also becoming vapid and tasteless. So then a nation as long as it retains possession of its land preserves its national characteristics in their full strength, while by *going into captivity*, though it may be purified by the process, there is also danger of its being rendered tame and feeble. By *his taste* is meant the flavour of the wine, and so Moab's national character.

is not changed] So the Versions generally except Aquila, who renders, *has not become bitter* (*i.e.* he forms the verb grammatically from מור and not from מור).

12. *wanderers*] Lit. **tilters**, those who make a vessel lean on one side that the contents may run out. Wine was not kept by the ancients in vessels of wood, from which the wine could be racked off as with us from a hole in the side, but in vessels of earthenware, which were carefully tilted on one side that the wine might run off clear, leaving the dregs behind. Luther renders the word *cellarmen* or *tapsters*, Ewald, *overturners*. The whole clause may be rendered, *I will send* **tilters** *unto him and they shall* **tilt** *him, and they shall empty his vessels, and break their* **pitchers** *in pieces*. The change in number is remarkable, Moab is first considered collectively, but in the second clause the various members of the body politic were in the prophet's mind. *Pitchers* originally meant *skins*, but the word came to signify small earthenware jars, Isai. xxx. 14, and thus the Chaldæans shall destroy of Moab everything that has contained the wine of her political life both small and great.

13. *Israel was ashamed of Beth-el*] After Shalmaneser had carried Israel away, they could trust no longer in the calf of Bethel, the chief seat of the idolatry established by Jeroboam, Hos. x. 15; Amos iii. 14, v. 5, 6, vii. 13; and the conquest of Moab by Nebuchadnezzar shall demonstrate with equal certainty the powerlessness of Chemosh.

14. *We* are *mighty*] *We are heroes*, veteran warriors.

15. *Moab is spoiled, and gone up* out of *her cities*] Rather, *Moab is spoiled,* **and her cities have gone up,** *i.e.* in smoke, have been burnt, Josh. viii. 20, 21; Judg. xx. 40. This, which is the only possible translation of the Hebrew words, labours under two difficulties, (1) the passages quoted do not quite prove that the verb without the mention of smoke or fire does mean *to be burnt*, and (2) that the verb is sing., though it follows a pl. nom. Many emendations have therefore been proposed, the happiest of which is Ewald's. By changing the vowels of the first word he obtains this reading, *The waster of Moab and of her towns is coming up* to the attack, *and her chosen youths are gone down to the slaughter*. Symmachus has this reading, but all the other versions support the rendering given above.

16. *near to come*] See Isai. xiii. 22. Henderson calculates that twenty-three years

name, say, How is the strong staff broken, *and* the beautiful rod!

18 Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from *thy* glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, *and* he shall destroy thy strong holds.

† Heb. *inhabitress.*

19 O †inhabitant of Aroer, stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, *and* say, What is done?

20 Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: [e]howl and cry; tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is spoiled, [e] Isai. 16. 7.

21 And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath,

22 And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

23 And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon,

24 And upon Kerioth, and upon

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elapsed between the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when this prophecy was spoken, and its accomplishment by the invasion of Moab five years after the capture of Jerusalem. So slowly does God's justice move onward. However near the blow, yet His hand lingers as long as there is the possibility of amendment.

17. *How is...*] The lamentation over Moab uttered by those *round about him, i.e.* the neighbouring nations, cp. ch. xlvi. 14, and those *that know his name*, nations more remote, who know little more than that there is such a people, takes the form of an elegy. For the metaphorical expressions, *staff of strength*, and *rod* or *sceptre of beauty*, by which are indicated the union of power and splendour in the Moabite kingdom, cp. Ps. cx. 2; Isai. xiv. 29; Ezek. xix. 11, 12, 14.

18. *Thou daughter...*] Lit. *Thou that inhabitest the daughter of Dibon, i.e.* thou that inhabitest Dibon itself. See note on ch. xlvi. 19, and for Dibon, Isai. xv. 2.

and sit in thirst] The Masorites are undoubtedly right in their correction *and sit.* For *in the thirst*, the parallel place, Isai. xlvii. 1, has *sit in the dust*, but Jeremiah intensifies both clauses. For *come down* he says *come down from glory*, and here he draws a picture of the conquered inhabitants, who formed a valuable part of the spoil of war, collected together outside the walls, waiting until the time comes for their captors to march them away to the slave-mart. The enemy occupied with plundering the houses of Dibon thinks little of the hunger and thirst of his prisoners. There is no reason therefore with many commentators to suppose that the word means *the thirsty ground* = dust.

strong holds] Burckhardt ('Travels,' p. 372) mentions that the remains of the fortifications of Dibon are still visible.

19. *Aroer*] As the enemy invades Moab from the north, this must be the town upon the Arnon, due south of Dibon. It is described in the note on Deut. ii. 36. If Dibon falls, its turn will come next, and therefore its **inhabitants** (pl. because the word is fem., and therefore is used collectively) are to be eagerly on the look out, asking every fugitive for news.

20. *Moab is confounded*] **Is put to shame.** *Moab is ashamed because she, i.e.* Dibon, *is broken* by her fortifications being battered down. This verse is the answer of the fugitives to the question in *v.* 19.

howl and cry] These verbs being fem. sing. must refer to Aroer, whose ruin is now so near. The Masorites have substituted the masc. pl., perhaps to make them agree with *tell ye.* But the persons now addressed are those who were on the watch for news from Dibon, and who are now to tell what they have heard **on** *Arnon, i.e.* on the banks of the river Arnon in Aroer.

21. *the plain country*] The Mishor, see *v.* 8.

Holon] This place never mentioned elsewhere in Scripture apparently took its name from caverns in its neighbourhood.

For *Jahazah* see Jahaz in Num. xxi. 23, and for *Mephaath* see Josh. xiii. 18.

22. *Beth-diblathaim*] *i.e. the house of the two cakes of figs*, perhaps so called from two hills in its neighbourhood. Eusebius, 'Onomast.' under Jaffa, says that Jahaza lay between Medaba and Diblathaim, and thus it can scarcely be identical with the Almon-Diblathaim of Num. xxxiii. 46.

23. *Beth-gamul*] *i.e. the house of the camel* (Fürst). Eli Smith's identification of it (Robinson's 'Pal.' III. App. 153) with the ruins of *Um-ed-Djemal*, twenty miles south of Bozrah, is untenable, as placing it too far away from the other places named.

Beth-meon] See note on Baal-Meon in Num. xxxii. 38, and cp. ib. xxxii. 3. Meon is probably the Moabite Olympus, and thus Beth-Baal-Meon, the full name of this town, Josh. xiii. 17, would signify the place where the heavenly Baal was worshipped.

24. *Kerioth*] Keil considers that Dietrich, in Merx' 'Archiv,' I. 320 sqq., has proved that this is a synonym of Ar, the old capital of Moab, Num. xxii. 36. He accounts

Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near.

25 The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the LORD.

26 ¶ Make ye him drunken: for he magnified *himself* against the LORD: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision.

27 For was not Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou ‖skippedst for joy.

‖ Or, *movedst thyself.*

28 O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and dwell in the rock, and be like the dove *that* maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.

29 We have heard the *f*pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.

f Isai. 16. 6, &c.

30 I know his wrath, saith the LORD; but *it shall* not *be* so; ‖his lies shall not so effect *it*.

‖ Or, *those on whom he he stayeth* (Heb. *his bars*) *do not right.*

31 Therefore will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all

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for its pl. form, by supposing that it was composed of two or more *towns*, Kerioth lit. meaning *towns*. From Amos ii. 2 it certainly appears to have been a considerable place. It used to be identified with El-Korriât, situated on the western termination of the long ridge of Mount Attarus, the Ataroth of Num. xxxii. 34.

Bozrah] Not the famous Edomite town of ch. xlix. 13 and Isai. lxiii. 1, nor Bostra in the Hauran, nor even the Bezer, said in Deut. iv. 43 to be situated in the Mishor of Moab, but probably the Bosora mentioned in 1 Macc. v. 26 in company with Bosor, *i.e.* Bezer. As the word means *sheepfolds*, it was no doubt a common name for places in this upland region, fit only for pasturage.

far or near] The *far* cities would be those on the east and south, towards the Arabian desert; those *near* would be the cities on the Jordan and Dead Sea.

25. *The horn*] *i.e.* his pride, Ps. lxxv. 4, 5, and *his arm*, his strength, ch. xvii. 5.

26. *Make ye him drunken*] The ministers of the divine justice are to make Moab drink of the wine-cup of God's fury, till terror deprives him of his senses. His sin has been that of magnifying himself against Jehovah by depriving the Reubenites of the country which God had taken from the Amorites to give them.

Moab also shall wallow] The verb means to *smite* the hand upon the thigh, ch. xxxi. 19, and to *clap* the hands in Job xxvii. 23. Its meaning here probably is *to fall plump down* as drunkards do, without any effort to save themselves.

27. *was he found among thieves?*] This clause should not be separated from the words that follow, *was he found among thieves that so often as thou speakest of him* **thou waggest thy head?** For the meaning of this verb see Note on Ps. lxiv. 8, where it is said to signify "contempt for a fallen enemy."

28. *dwell in the rock*] See ch. iv. 29. Resistance being hopeless, the sole chance of escape is to take refuge in inaccessible fastnesses.

in the sides...] The word lit. means the further side, and thus the clause should be translated, *Be ye like the dove that maketh her nest* **on the further side** *of the mouth of the pit.* "The wild rock pigeon invariably selects...deep ravines for its nesting and roosting places," Tristram, 'N. H. of B.,' 214.

29, 30. These two verses are taken from Isai. xvi. 6, but with alterations which give them a more animated form. *We have heard*, say the Jews, *the pride of Moab:* and there is here an accumulation of words to intensify the meaning. The complaint is then taken up by God Himself; *Yea! I, saith Jehovah, know his excessive arrogancy.*

30. *his wrath*] *His excessive arrogancy.* The word means anything in excess, that passes due bounds. Usually it is employed of violent anger, but the sense must be fixed by the context, and here that which passes bounds is Moab's haughtiness.

but it shall *not* be *so*] Most commentators take *not so* as a substantive, meaning *unreality, worthlessness*, as in ch. viii. 6, xxiii. 10, and translate, *I know, saith Jehovah, his arrogancy, and the emptiness of his boastings; they have wrought emptiness.* The word rendered *lies* really means *prattle, babble*, but the Masorites mistook it for a similar word meaning *staves*, Exod. xxv. 13, and have therefore put the stop after *not so*. They intended the clause to be translated, *his staves have wrought not so.* Staves would mean princes, as in Hos. xi. 6, where the A. V. renders it *branches*. But see note on Isai. xvi. 6.

31. *Therefore will I howl...*] In Isai. xvi. 7 Moab laments over herself. Here the tenderness of Jeremiah shews itself in his lamenting in his own person over the distresses which will come upon her. "The prophets of Israel were not like the prophets of the Gentiles. Balaam wished to exterminate the Israelites without

Moab; *mine heart* shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

32 O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach *even* to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage.

[f] Isai. 16. 10. 33 And [f] joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; *their* shouting *shall be* no shouting.

34 From the cry of Heshbon *even* unto Elealeh, *and even* unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, [h] from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim, *as* an heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be [†] desolate.

[h] Isai. 15. 5, 6.

[†] Heb. *desolations.*

35 Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods.

36 Therefore mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: because the riches *that* he hath gotten are perished.

[i] Isai. 15. 2, 3. 37 For [i] every head *shall be* bald, and every beard [†] clipped: upon all

[†] Heb. *diminished.*

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cause; but the prophets of Israel grieve over the punishment which comes upon the peoples," Rashi on Isai. xv. 5.

mine heart *shall mourn*] The insertion of the words *mine heart* from Isai. xv. 5 is not justifiable, though they do not affect the sense. The Hebrew is, *one shall mourn*, and as it is put indefinitely, our equivalent would be, *they shall mourn.*

the men of Kir-heres] See notes on *foundations* and *Kir-Chareseth* in Isai. xvi. 7.

32. *O vine of Sibmah...*] Or, *More than the weeping of Jazer* over its ruined vineyards *will I weep for thee, O vine of Sibmah.* Cp. Isai. xvi. 8, 9.

thy plants] *Thy* branches *are gone over the sea, i.e.* the Dead Sea. The power of Moab is felt even on the western side of the Dead Sea.

the sea of Jazer] Jazer lies in an upland valley about fifteen miles north of Heshbon, and though Seetzen found some ponds in its neighbourhood, there was no trace of any inland lake. Many commentators therefore imagine that *sea* has been inserted by some scribe from his eye catching it in the previous clause; but the Syr. and Vulg. have the reading, and perhaps the valley near Jazer, where the ponds now are, may in old times have had a larger body of water in it.

the spoiler] Isai. xvi. 9 says, a *shouting*, and for *thy vintage* he has *thy harvest.* Vintage is so much more appropriate, and differs so little from the word in Isaiah, that probably it is the right reading in both places.

33. See on this verse, Isai. xvi. 10.

winepresses] Rather, *wine-vats*, vats into which the wine runs from the presses.

their *shouting* shall be *no shouting*] The *hedad* was any loud shout, *e.g.* a war-cry, ch. li. 14, or the joyful cry of those who tread the grapes. Thus then *the hedad is no hedad*, the vintage shout is silence. For the vines have been destroyed, and desolation reigns where once was the merry tramp of vintagers.

34. *From the cry...*] This verse is taken, but with many modifications, from Isai. xv. 4. The meaning is that, taking up the lamentation of Heshbon, the Moabites break forth into a wail, heard as far as Elealeh, scarcely two miles distant (Num. xxxii. 37), but thence spreading over the whole land to Jahaz, Zoar, and Horonaim on the southern and south-western borders of the land.

an heifer of three years old] Applied in Isai. xv. 5 to Zoar, but here to Horonaim. Köster, 'Theol. Stud.' 1862, p. 114, takes it as a proper name, *Eglah for the third part*, and ingeniously argues that Zoar, Horonaim, and Eglah formed a tripolis, or confederacy of three towns, and that Eglah might therefore be put after either one or the other. For this use of the adj., as meaning *for the third part*, he cites Isai. xix. 24.

the waters also of Nimrim] Probably the Wady-en-Nemeirah at the south-eastern end of the Dead Sea. See Smith's 'Bib. Dict.' under Nimrim.

35. *in the high places*] Lit. *on a high place*, cp. ch. vii. 31. The last stage of national ruin is reached when thus the rites of religion entirely cease.

36. *like pipes*] Isai. xvi. 11 says, *like a harp*, but Jeremiah takes a wind instrument, used at funerals, Matt. ix. 23.

the riches that he hath gotten] Lit. *that which remains over, a superfluity*, translated *abundance* in Isai. xv. 7. So our Lord's word for abundance in Luke xii. 15 means the having more than is absolutely necessary.

37. *every head...*] For the shaving of the head see Isai. xv. 2. The Hebrew word for *clipped* is slightly altered from Isaiah, but there

the hands *shall be* cuttings, and upon the loins sackcloth.

38 *There shall be* lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure, saith the LORD.

39 They shall howl, *saying*, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the [†]back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him.

40 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab.

41 [‡]Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised, and the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

42 And Moab shall be destroyed from *being* a people, because he hath magnified *himself* against the LORD.

43 [*]Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *shall be* upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD.

44 He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

45 They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force: but [l]a fire shall come forth out

† Heb. *neck.*

‡ Or, *The cities.*

* Isai. 24. 17, 18.

l Numb. 21. 28.

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is no reason for translating it *diminished*, as in the marg. Isaiah has *cut off*, Jeremiah, *cut short* (Nägelsb.).

cuttings] Cp. chs. xvi. 6, xli. 5, xlvii. 5.

38. *generally*] Rather, **entirely**. Lit. *Upon all the housetops of Moab and in her streets there is solely lamentation.*

a vessel...] See ch. xxii. 28.

39. *They shall howl*] The tense is the perfect, but is used, as is often the case in Hebrew, of an action still proceeding, and therefore it must be translated in the present. The words lit. are, *How is it broken down! they wail! How hath Moab turned the back in shame! Yea, Moab is become a laughter and a terror* (ch. xvii. 17) *to all who are round about him.*

40. *as an eagle*] The rapid and irresistible attack of Nebuchadnezzar is compared to the impetuous dash of the eagle on its prey, Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. xlix. 22; Ezek. xvii. 3. Similarly Isaiah compares Cyrus to a bird of prey, ch. xlvi. 11. See Stanley, 'Lect.' II. 532, and cp. Hor. 'Od.' IV. 4. 1, Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem, &c.

41. *Kerioth*] *i.e. cities* (marg.), see note on *v.* 24. There is a play upon the word which cannot be reproduced in a translation. Ar, the capital of Moab, was called Kerioth = towns, and it is in this second sense that the prophet in the next clause puts *strong holds* in antithesis with it.

are surprised] Or, **are captured**, stormed by force.

the mighty men's hearts...] Or, *the heart of the warriors of Moab shall be on that day*, &c.

43, 44. This and the following verse are taken with slight alterations from Isai. xxiv. 17, 18, and express the hopelessness of Moab's condition. Probably they had passed into a proverb.

44. *He that fleeth*] A correction of the Masorites, but confirmed by Isaiah. The C'tib has *he flees*.

45, 46. Excepting the first clause, these verses are taken from Num. xxi. 28, 29, xxiv. 17, but are apparently quoted from memory.

45. *because of the force*] Rather, **without force**. Translate therefore, *The fugitives stand powerless in the shadow of Heshbon.* The verb is the perfect of completed action, and in English the present must be used. As Heshbon was the capital of the Ammonites, the sense is that the defeated Moabites look to Ammon for protection. See note on *v.* 2.

but a fire...] Not only will Ammon refuse aid to Moab, but her ruin is to come forth from Heshbon. To shew this Jeremiah has recourse to the old triumphal poetry of the Mosaic age, called *proverbs* in Num. xxi. 27, where see note.

As the Ammonites were to be conquered before the Moabites, and as Nebuchadnezzar was to form the plan of his campaign in Heshbon, *v.* 2, it has been objected that Jeremiah is mistaken in describing the defeated Moabites as seeking help from this captured city. But this is treating poetry as prose. Put into prose, Jeremiah's meaning is that so far from Ammon being able to assist Moab, the ruin of the latter would come from Ammon. Instead of this prosaic statement Jeremiah describes the defeated Moabites as seeking the cool shelter of Heshbon's walls. But as they stand there powerless, the walls instead of shade blaze forth with fire, and the fugitives

of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the †tumultuous ones.

† Heb. *children of noise.*

46 Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken †captives, and thy daughters captives.

† Heb. *in captivity.*

47 ¶ Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far *is* the judgment of Moab.

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are burnt up. The tense of the verb confirms this interpretation, for it is the past, lit. *for a fire* **came forth** *from Heshbon*, &c.

from the midst of Sihon] In Num. xxi. 28, *from the city of Sihon.* The phrase used here is elliptical, being lit. *from between Sihon*, or fully as in Gen. xlix. 10, *from between his feet*, *i.e.* from his presence. So in Arabic, a servant is said to stand between his master's hands, *i.e.* before him.

the corner] *i.e.* of the beard.

the crown of the head] Probably the right reading in Num. xxiv. 17, the difference consisting in the interchange of letters constantly confounded in MSS. (*i.e.* קדקד for קרקר). The two naturally go together, and mean that the fire of war consumes both far and near, both hair and beard, *i.e.* everything that the fire can singe and destroy.

the tumultuous ones] Lit. *sons of the battle shout*, the brave Moabites. See the note on Num. xxiv. 17. For the archaic *sheth* Jeremiah has substituted the more modern *shaon.*

47. *Yet will I bring again*] A similar promise is given to Egypt, Ammon, and Elam, chs. xlvi. 26, xlix. 6, 39.

Thus far...Moab] An editorial note by the same hand which added the similar clause to ch. li. 64.

NOTE on CHAP. XLVIII. 5.

The C'tib has *luboth*, *planks*, which Hitzig defends, and translates, *Like the going up of planks*, *i.e.* as planks in a building are placed one above another, *so shall weeping mount up upon weeping.* The LXX. also read Ἀλώθ, and Sym. renders it ἡ ἀνάβασις τῆς πλακωτῆς, and the Syro-Hex., ἡ ἀν. τῆς πλακώδους. But though the reading is thus an old one, yet the parallelism with Horonaim proves that the word must be the name of a town, and the Syr. and Vulg. both have Luhith, which spelling is confirmed by Isai. xv. 5.

CHAPTER XLIX.

1 *The judgment of the Ammonites.* 6 *Their restoration.* 7 *The judgment of Edom,* 23 *of Damascus,* 28 *of Kedar,* 30 *of Hazor,* 34 *and of Elam.* 39 *The restoration of Elam.*

1 CONCERNING the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why *then* doth ‖their king inherit [a]Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

‖ Or, *Against.*

‖ Or, *Melcom.*

[a] Amos i. 13.

CHAP. XLIX. To the north of the Moabites lay the country of the Ammonites, a closely allied nation, Gen. xix. 37, 38, who claimed that the land assigned to the tribe of Gad had originally belonged to them, Judg. xi. 13. Though Jephtha denied this statement, ib. 15, evidently they had held it before it was conquered by the Amorite Sihon, Josh. xiii. 25, from whom the Israelites won it in battle, and in subsequent times the Ammonites constantly contested the possession of it with the Gadites, with varied success, 1 S. xi.; 2 S. x., xi., xii. 26; 2 Chro. xx., xxvi. 8, xxvii. 5. From the scattered notices of them in Holy Scripture, they seem to have been far less civilized than the Moabites, and possessed but one stronghold, Rabbah, not devoting themselves to agriculture, but wandering with their flocks over the Arabian wastes. When, however, Tiglath-Pileser carried the inhabitants of Gilead into captivity, the Ammonites occupied much of the vacant land, and many of them probably adopted a more settled life, as we find them growing in power, and at this time they even possessed Heshbon, once the frontier town between Reuben and Gad, Josh. xiii. 26, and subsequently the property of the Moabites, Isai. xv. 4. It is this seizure of the territory of Gad which forms the starting-point of Jeremiah's prediction. Older prophecies against Ammon are Amos i. 13—15, in which they are accused of practising the most revolting barbarities, and Zeph. ii. 8—11, both of which seem to have been present to the prophet's mind.

1. *Hath Israel no sons?*] *i.e.* the Ammonites in seizing Gilead have acted as if the country had no rightful owner. True, Israel had been carried into captivity by the Assyrians, but their sons were to return, and the land was their hereditary property.

their king] **Milcom**, see marg. So all the

2 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in [b]Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

[b] Amos 1. 14.

3 Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; for [‖]their king shall go into captivity, *and* his [c]priests and his princes together.

[‖] Or, *Melcom.*
[c] chap. 48. 7.

4 Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, [‖]thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto me?

[‖] Or, *thy valley floweth away.*

5 Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth.

6 And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

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versions, but the Masorites substitute for it *their king*, both here and in Amos i. 15, and Zeph. i. 5. In the latter place the A. V., in spite of their punctuation, takes the word as a proper name, and renders Malcham. For a similar error see note on 2 S. xii. 30. See also the note on 1 K. xi. 5. Milcom is used for the Ammonites just as Chemosh, in ch. xlviii. 7, is the equivalent of the Moabites.

inherit] *i.e.* **take possession of**, see note on ch. viii. 10. With righteous indignation the prophet asks the Ammonites, why in Israel's troubles they have seized by force upon the country which is still his, and should be left vacant ready for him on his return.

2. *alarm of war*] See ch. iv. 19, and cp. Amos i. 14.

Rabbah] *i.e.* the *great* city, often in the A. V. erroneously called Rabbath, *e.g.* Deut. iii. 11. In 2 S. xii. 27 a distinction is made between Rabbah, the citadel, and the town itself, lying below upon the Jabbok, and called there "the city of waters."

a desolate heap] A Tel, or mound of desolation, see ch. xxx. 18, and Deut. xiii. 16.

her daughters] *i.e.* unwalled villages, cp. Num. xxi. 25 marg.; Josh. xv. 45.

shall Israel be heir...] *i.e. shall be victor over his victors*, see note on *inherit*, *v.* 1, and cp. Micah i. 15.

3. *Ai*] Certainly not the town on the west of the Jordan, Josh. vii. 2, and we know of no Ai on the east of the river. Venema and Ewald take it as meaning a heap of ruins, while Graf would read Ar, but the soundness of the Hebrew text, as far as the consonants are concerned, is too absolute for it to be lightly meddled with, and the versions also all have Ai. Most probably, therefore, there was an Ai in the Ammonite territory, but as Rabbah was confessedly their only fortified town, it is not to be wondered at that this small place is not mentioned elsewhere.

daughters of Rabbah] Villages, as in *v.* 2.

by the hedges] Fields were not divided by hedges till recent times, and probably the term itself meant an *enclosure* at the time when the A. V. was made. Most commentators take the words as meaning sheepfolds, but this requires the addition of the word sheep, as in Num. xxxii. 16, &c. More probably it means the walls which enclose the vineyards, as in Num. xxii. 24. The cities being destroyed, the inhabitants run hither and thither to see if they can find shelter for the night under the vineyard walls.

their king] **Milcom.** How untenable is the rendering *their king* is seen by the mention of *his priests*. The god has priests, and as he is lord of the whole land, the princes are his also. The king might have princes, but certainly not priests. In Amos i. 15 it is, *he and his princes*, which leaves the sense uncertain.

4. *the valleys*] The territory of the Ammonites was a high table-land, crossed by fertile valleys, through which numerous brooks found their way to the Jordan.

thy flowing valley] The valley in which Rabbah was situated. The words are difficult, but no better rendering has been given. Lit. it is, *thy valley floweth with abundance*, or, if the word be a noun instead of a verb, *in the abundance of thy valley*. The LXX. again have, *in the valleys of the Anakim*, as in ch. xlvii. 5, where see note.

5. *every man right forth*] Lit. *each man before him*, a phrase well translated in Josh. vi. 5, *every man straight before him*. The Ammonites are to be so weakened by Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, that they will live in continual terror of all the tribes which rove in the contiguous districts, and at the slightest alarm will flee straight away without thought of resistance.

him that wandereth] Used collectively. There will be no one to rally the fugitives.

6. *afterward...*] See note on xlviii. 47. In 1 Macc. v. 6, 7, the Ammonites appear again as a powerful nation.

7 ¶ Concerning Edom, thus saith
[d] Obad. 8. the LORD of hosts; [d] *Is* wisdom no
more in Teman? is counsel perished
from the prudent? is their wisdom
vanished?

[f] Or, *they are turned back.* 8 Flee ye, [f] turn back, dwell deep,
O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will
bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
the time *that* I will visit him.

9 If [e] grapegatherers come to thee, [e] Obad. 5.
would they not leave *some* gleaning
grapes? if thieves by night, they will
destroy [†] till they have enough. [† Heb. *their sufficiency.*]

10 But I have made Esau bare, I

Prophecy concerning Edom.
Chap. xlix. 7—22.

As the country of Edom stretched along the south of Judah from the border of Moab on the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean and the Arabian deserts, it held the same relation to Judah which Moab held towards the kingdom of Israel. Although expressly reserved from attack by Moses, Deut. ii. 5, xxiii. 7, we find subsequently the record of a long feud (1 S. xiv. 47; 2 S. viii. 14; 2 K. viii. 20, xiv. 7, 22, xvi. 6; 2 Chro. xxviii. 17), which caused the Edomites finally to cherish so bitter an enmity against Judah (Joel iii. 19; Amos i. 11), that they even exulted with cruel joy over its capture by the Chaldæans (Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Lam. iv. 21; Ezek. xxxv. 15; Obad. 10—14), and shewed great cruelty towards those who fled to them for refuge.

Of the prophecies against Edom in Isaiah, Amos, and Joel, Jeremiah has made no use, but the first eight verses of Obadiah are also found in Jeremiah as follows:—

Jer. xlix.	7	= Obad.	8
,,	9	= ,,	5
,,	10	= ,,	6, 7
,,	14	= ,,	1
,,	15	= ,,	2
,,	16	= ,,	3, 4

Now as Jeremiah wrote before the capture of Jerusalem, and Obadiah apparently after it, see *vv.* 13, 14, it might seem certain that Obadiah copied from Jeremiah. But Caspari, in his commentary on Obadiah, makes out a very strong case in favour of the other view. The passages common to both bear, he argues, no mark of the distinctive style of Jeremiah, nor is their arrangement so natural. How powerfully does Obadiah begin his prophecy with words which hold a far less forcible place in Jeremiah! And so the plundering of Edom follows naturally in Obadiah upon God's declaration that He will tear her down even from among the stars, while in Jeremiah it comes in tamely upon a summons to the inhabitants for flight.

So convincing do Caspari's arguments appear to most commentators, including Keil and Nägelsb., that they unhesitatingly accept his conclusion. And as the words in Obad. 11 sqq. seem plainly to refer to the capture of Jerusalem, various attempts have been made to explain this difficulty. For instance, the capture of Jerusalem may have been that in the days of Jehoram, 2 Chro. xxi. 17, and certainly the words of Amos i. 11 seem to shew that Edom had been guilty of some special cruelty, like that spoken of by Obadiah, long before the time of Jeremiah. Or secondly, as the verses common to both are all found in the first part of Obadiah, *vv.* 1—8, the two prophets may both have made common use of some ancient prediction (Ewald and Graf); or thirdly, Obadiah may have written his prophecy in two parts, *vv.* 1—9 before the destruction of Jerusalem, and *vv.* 10—21 subsequently. None of these suggestions are altogether satisfactory, but the full discussion of the question belongs to the Introduction to Obadiah.

7—13. In the first strophe the prophet describes Edom as terror-stricken. Her boasted wisdom has abandoned her in the hour of danger. Strangers and settlers all flee away, for it is no mere plundering incursion that is laying her waste, but an invasion by a foe so strong and merciless that only the fatherless and widows will remain, with no refuge but God's mercy. How could it be otherwise? When the divine justice spares not Judah, how can Edom escape? No, God has sworn by Himself that her cities shall be desolate.

7. *Teman*] A strip of land on the north-east of Edom (Fürst, Ges., Keil), put here for Edom generally. St Jerome, however, in his notes on Amos i. 12, Obad. 9, apparently places it in the south of Idumæa. Its inhabitants were among those "children of the East" famed for wisdom, because of their skill in proverbs and dark sayings.

is their wisdom vanished?] Lit. *poured out, emptied.* This is a more tenable rendering than that of Fürst, *is their wisdom corrupted, made flavourless?*

8. *dwell deep*] Lit. *make deep to dwell.* Henderson very well explains this of the Dedanites (on whom see ch. xxv. 23), who were used to travel through the Edomite territory with their caravans, retiring as far as possible into the Arabian deserts to be out of the way of the invaders. The A. V. is right in translating these two verbs as imperatives, and not preterites as in the marg.

9. Translate, *If vintagers come to thee, they* **will not leave any gleaning**: *if thieves by night, they will destroy their fill.* The A.V. has inserted the interrogative from Obad. 5 without authority.

have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he *is* not.

11 Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

12 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, they whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and *art* thou he *that* shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink *of it*.

13 For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

14 I have heard a [f]rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle. [f] Obad. 1

15 For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, *and* despised among men.

16 Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, *and* the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make

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10. *But*] **For.** The prophet here gives the reason why the invaders destroy Edom so completely. God has stripped him bare (cp. the use of the verb *in* Isai. xlvii. 2; ch. xiii. 26), and uncovered *his secret places*, *i.e.* the hiding-places in the mountains of Seir, whither he had been wont in time of war to drive his flocks and stow away his treasures; cp. Obad. 7.

his seed] Esau's seed, the Edomites, while *his brethren* are the nations joined with him in the possession of the land, Amalek, Esau's grandson, Gen. xxxvi. 12, and perhaps the Simeonites, 1 Chro. iv. 42, but not the Horites, as Keil thinks, see Deut. ii. 12 and note on Gen. xiv. 6. Lastly, *his neighbours* are Dedan, Tema, Buz; see ch. xxv. 23.

11. *Leave thy fatherless children*] As with Moab, ch. xlviii. 47, and Ammon, xlix. 6, so there is mercy for Edom. Though the men fall in battle, yet the widows shall be protected, and in the orphans of Edom the nation shall once again revive.

12. *whose judgment* was *not*] Or, *whose* **rule** or custom *was not*. The word translated *judgment* constantly means *habit*, *practice*, *e.g.* "after the former manner," Gen. xl. 13, *i.e.* according to the previous custom. So again, "as the manner was," 2 K. xi. 14. Sometimes it so completely loses all reference to its original signification, for which see note on ch. viii. 7, that we have, "What *manner* of man was he?" in 2 K. i. 7. So then here: it was not the ordinary manner of God's people to suffer from His wrath: but now when they are drinking of the wine-cup of fury, ch. xxv. 15, how can those not in covenant with Him hope to escape?

have...drunken] The verbs are future, so that the verse should be translated, *Behold they whose* **rule** *was not to drink of the cup* **shall** *surely drink: and art thou he that shall go altogether unpunished? Thou shalt not go unpunished, but shalt surely drink.*

13. *Bozrah*] See Gen. xxxvi. 33; Isai. xxxiv. 6.

perpetual wastes] Cp. ch. xxv. 9.

14. In the second strophe, *vv.* 14—18, we have Edom's chastisement. The nations are mustered to the war, and Edom, now so proud and confident in the strength of her rock cities, is made small and despised, and her territories reduced to a waste like Sodom and Gomorrah.

a rumour] Lit. *a hearing*, *i.e.* a report or tidings, cp. Prov. xv. 30, where in the note it is explained as meaning *news*. The prophet hears tidings from Jehovah, announcing that the nations are mustering to the war with Edom.

an ambassador] Or, **messenger**, *i.e.* herald. The business of an ambassador is to negotiate, of a herald to carry a message. Cp. Isai. xviii. 2, lvii. 9.

15. *small among the heathen*] Rather, *among the* **nations**, *i.e.* of no political importance, and therefore *despised among men*, spoken of by men with contempt.

16. *Thy terribleness*] This is the most tenable rendering of a word not found elsewhere, though much of the rest of the verse is identical with Obad. 4. Edom's terribleness consisted in her cities being hewn in the sides of inaccessible rocks, whence she could suddenly descend for predatory warfare, and retire to her fastnesses without fear of reprisals.

the clefts of the rock] Or, **the fastnesses of Sela**, the rock-city, literally translated Petra by the Greeks, see notes on 2 K. xiv. 7; Isai. xvi. 1. The word rendered *clefts* means places of refuge.

the height of the hill] *i.e.* of Bozrah, de-

[1]Obad. 4. thy [e]nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD.

17 Also Edom shall be a desolation: [k] chap. 50. 13. [k]every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

[i] Gen. 19. 25. chap. 50. 40. 18 [i]As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

19 Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make *him* run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man, that* I may appoint over her? for who *is* like me? and who will [‖k] appoint me the time? and who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

[‖] Or, *convent me in judgment.* [k] Job 41. 10.

20 Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock chap. 50. 44, 45.

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scribed by Robinson (II. 570) as "situated on a hill, on the top of which is a castle."

17. *desolation...astonished*] These words are noun and verb from the same root, and should be so rendered as to shew this relation: *And Edom shall become a terror* (see ch. v. 30)*: every passer by shall be terrified, and shudder at all her plagues*, cp. chs. xviii. 16, xix. 8.

18. *the neighbour* cities *thereof*] *i.e.* Admah and Zeboim.

By *a son of man*, lit. *a son of Adam*, is meant any man, any member of the human race. As noticed by Robinson, II. 575, from A.D. 536 onwards, Petra suddenly vanishes from the pages of history. It was unknown to the Arabs, was confounded by the Crusaders with an entirely different place, and only in the present century was its real site discovered by Burckhardt, and full details given of its splendid but desolate remains by Laborde.

19. In this concluding strophe, *vv.* 19—22, the fall of Edom is compared to the miserable state of a flock worried by an enemy strong and fierce as a lion and swift as an eagle.

he shall come up like a lion] See note on ch. iv. 7. The conqueror is unnamed, as in chs. xlvi. 18, xlviii. 40.

the swelling of Jordan] Or, *the* **pride** *of Jordan*, the thickets on his banks, ch. xii. 5.

against the habitation of the strong] Or, **to the abiding pasturage.** The word rendered *habitation* means the grassy spot where the shepherds encamp, ch. vi. 2, and the Hebr. word *eythan* means not *strong*, but permanent, ch. v. 15. The lion stalks forth from the jungle to attack the fold, sure to find sheep there because of the perennial pasture. Keil's translation, *rocky-mead*, is untenable. *Eythan* has no such meaning, nor because a rock is firm and lasting, Num. xxiv. 21, does it follow that lasting means rocky. Nägelsb. is much better, *an evergreen pasturage.*

I will suddenly make him run away from her] Right: the first verb only modifies the second, it being lit. *I will wink, I will make him run off from her.* See note on *gather*, ch. viii. 13, and cp. iv. 5, &c. There is, however, great difficulty as to what is meant by the pronouns *him* and *her*. For *him* the LXX. and Syr. read *them*, as in ch. l. 44, and this is the right sense, *I will make him*, Edom, *run away from it*, the pasturage.

and who is *a chosen...*] Better, *and* **I will appoint over it**, the abandoned land of Edom, **him who is** *chosen*, my chosen ruler Nebuchadnezzar.

who will appoint me the time?] The plaintiff, in giving notice of a suit, had to mention the time when the defendant must appear. It is therefore rightly explained in the marg., *who will convene me in judgment?* See Job ix. 19. In these questions Jehovah identifies Himself with Nebuchadnezzar, who was acting as His vicegerent, ch. xxv. 9, and shews the hopelessness of Edom's cause. For who is like Jehovah, His equal in power and might? Who will dare litigate with Him, and question His right? Finally, what shepherd, what king or ruler will stand up in battle before Him to defend his flock from so dread an assailant?

20. *Surely the least...*] Rather, *Surely* **they will worry them, the feeble ones of the flock: surely their pasture shall be terror-stricken over them;** or, as the verb may be taken transitively, *Surely he will make their pasture terror-stricken over them.* The rendering of the A. V. is defended by Hävernick, who understands by *the least of the flock* the feeble Jews, who, nevertheless, shall conquer the Edomites. But the verb does not mean to *drag out*, but to *worry*, as lions and wolves worry sheep. As shewn in *v.* 19, Nebuchadnezzar approaches Edom's fold as a lion, invincible because God is with him. No shepherd can resist him, but all flee, and leave the sheep unprotected. Thereupon the Chaldæans enter, and treat the poor feeble

shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them.

21 The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the † Red sea.

† Heb. *Weedy sea.*

22 Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

23 ¶ Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad: for they have heard evil tidings: they are † fainthearted; *there is* sorrow ‖ on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

† Heb. *melted.* ‖ Or, *as on the sea.*

24 Damascus is waxed feeble, *and* turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on *her*: anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail.

25 How is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!

26 Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts.

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flock so barbarously, that the very fold is horrified at their cruelty. The translation of the A.V., *shall make desolate*, derives the verb from another root, from which the laws of grammar scarcely permit of its formation.

21. *The earth is moved*] **Quakes.** It is the regular word for an earthquake.

at the cry...] The arrangement is much more poetical in the Hebrew, *The shriek—to the sea of Suph is heard its sound.* Why the Red Sea is so called see note on Exod. x. 19.

22. *he shall come up and fly as the eagle*] The repetition of the verb, *he shall come up*, shews that Jeremiah had his former metaphor in *v.* 19 in mind. Having there compared Nebuchadnezzar to a lion, the emblem of strength, he now likens him to an eagle, the emblem of swiftness. The rapidity of his movements doubles the terror caused by the greatness of his strength. Finally the misery of the inhabitants, compared there to sheep worried by wild beasts, is now, with less close adherence to the metaphor, described as the pain of a woman in her pangs.

23. *Concerning Damascus*] Though the superscription is confined to Damascus, the prophecy relates to the whole of Aram, called by us Syria, which was divided into two parts, the northern, of which Hamath was the capital, and that to the south-east, belonging to Damascus. The third Aramaic kingdom, that of Zobah, no longer existed.

Hamath is confounded] Or, **is ashamed.** For *Hamath* see note on Gen. x. 18. It was claimed by Israel as part of its inheritance, Num. xxxiv. 8, was actually subject to Solomon, 2 Chro. viii. 4, and again conquered for Israel by Jeroboam, 2 K. xiv. 25. For its history as gathered from the cuneiform inscriptions see Schrader, p. 30.

Arpad] Schrader, p. 204, says that this place is called Arpaddu in the inscriptions. It lay about fourteen miles north of Aleppo, at a place where is now a heap of ruins called Tel Erfâd. Kieppert, 'Deut. Morg. Ges.' xxv. 655.

they are fainthearted] The marg. *melted* is wrong. The verb means that the sinews are relaxed, unknit, through terror.

there is *sorrow on the sea*] **In** *the sea.* Nearly twenty MSS. read *like the sea*, the change being a very slight one (כ for ב). As the next clause is taken verbatim from Isai. lvii. 20, and as the reading there is *like the sea*, there would be little doubt of this being right, were it not that all the versions have *in the sea.* As the sea is used in Isai. lvii. 20 of the agitation of the thoughts of evil men, its sense here also probably is, *there is sorrow*, or rather anxiety, *in the agitated hearts* of the Syrians.

24. and *turneth*, &c.] Omit *and.* In the original the rapid sequence of unconnected sentences greatly heightens the effect of the description. *Damascus is unnerved: she turned to flee, and a trembling seized her; anguish and writhings took hold of her as of a woman in travail.* The prophet represents the people as standing so paralysed and quaking with terror, as to be no more able to flee than a woman suddenly overtaken by her pangs.

25. *How is the city of praise not left*] As the words stand they are an exclamation of sorrow wrung from the prophet at the thought of the people of Damascus thus remaining to be slaughtered. The words *my joy* have made most commentators put the words into the mouth of the Damascenes themselves, and if so the only probable exposition offered is that of Graf, who takes *How* as meaning *Would that* the city of praise were not abandoned, the house of my joy. But the Vulg., Syr., and Targ. omit *my*, and if retained it must be understood as expressing the prophet's own sympathy. The praise of Damascus for beauty has been universal from the days of Naaman, 2 K. v. 12, to those of the most recent travellers.

26. *shall be cut off*] See note on ch. viii. 14.

[1]Amos 1. 4. 27 And I will kindle a [1]fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

28 ¶ Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east.

29 Their tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, Fear *is* on every side.

[m] ver. 8. [†] Heb. *flit greatly.* 30 ¶ [m] Flee, [†]get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you.

31 Arise, get you up unto the [‖]wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, *which* dwell alone.

[‖] Or, *that is at ease.*

32 And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter *into all* winds them *that are* [†]in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD.

[†] Heb. *cut off into corners,* or, *that have the corners of their hair polled.*

33 And Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons, *and* a desolation for ever: there shall no man abide there, nor *any* son of man dwell in it.

34 ¶ The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against

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27. *I will kindle*] This verse is taken from Amos i. 4, where see note.

Ben-hadad] See note on 1 K. xi. 14, 23.

28. *Concerning Kedar*] See on ch. ii. 10.

the kingdoms of Hazor] Hazor, derived from *hazer*, an unwalled village, is a general appellative of those Arab tribes who were partially settled, while Kedar signifies the Bedaween, who used only tents. If they thus possessed villages their divisions would be more properly called kingdoms than if their chiefs were the mere sheikhs of wandering tribes. Ewald, however, argues that Hazor is another way of spelling Jetor, *i.e.* Ituræa, whose inhabitants, with the Kedarenes, would naturally be called *the sons of the East.*

shall smite] Or, **smote.** This statement of the fulfilment of the prophecy was probably added at the same time as the reference to Gaza in ch. xlvii. 1. The retention in the Hebrew of the spelling Nebuchadrezzor, a mere slip of the scribe, occasioned by Hazor immediately before, is an instance of the extreme scrupulousness of the Masorites.

29. *curtains*] The hangings of which the tents are formed, see ch. iv. 20.

Fear is on every side] *Magor-missabib*, see ch. vi. 25. Not to be understood as the Chaldæan war-cry, but as indicating the panic which is the result of the unexpected onset of the enemy.

30. *Flee, get you far off*] Both verbs mean to flee, but the second is the more emphatic. They may be rendered, *Flee, hasten rapidly away.*

dwell deep] See note on *v.* 8.

a purpose against you] See Note at end of Chapter.

31. *Arise, get you up*] These words are in the Hebrew the same as are translated, *Arise ye, go up*, in *v.* 28. They thus shew that the poem is to be divided into two strophes, each of which will be found to consist of three parts closely answering to one another. In the first the enemy is summoned to the attack; in the second the cattle and camels of Kedar are promised for spoil; in the third, rapid flight is set forth as the sole chance of escape, for the king of Babel has purposed their ruin, and this purpose we see in the corresponding clause completely accomplished.

the wealthy nation] Or, *a nation* **at rest,** living tranquilly and in calm repose. So *without care* would be more correctly rendered **securely,** the Hebrew being *in confidence.*

gates nor bars] Cp. note on Deut. iii. 5.

which *dwell alone*] **They** *dwell alone, i.e.* have neither alliances with other nations, nor intercourse by commerce. So Israel was to dwell alone, Num. xxiii. 9.

32. *them...corners*] Or, **those who clip the corners of their beards,** see note on ch. ix. 26.

from all sides] Nebuchadnezzar will so arrange his troops that the Bedaween will be surrounded on all sides, and being thus unable to escape in a body will be scattered to *all the winds*, to the four quarters of the earth.

33. *dragons*] *i.e.* **jackals,** ch. x. 22. For the rest cp. *v.* 18.

34. *against Elam*] Or, **concerning** *Elam.* The preposition is not, however, the simple *to=of*, used in *vv.* 1, 7, 23, 28, but a stronger one often interchanged by Jeremiah with the prep. *against.* There is no reason for supposing that it is so interchanged here. This

Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,

35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might.

36 And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.

37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them:

38 And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

39 ¶ But it shall come to pass in the latter days, *that* [n]I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

[n] chap. 48. 47. ver. 6.

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country, called by the Persians Uvaja, by the early Greeks Cissia, but better known subsequently as Susiana, is the modern Chuzistan, and lies on the east of Chaldæa, from which it is separated by the Tigris. In the cuneiform inscriptions we find the Elamites in perpetual war with Nineveh, with whom they contested possession of the country of Rasi (Lenormant, 'Les prem. Civ.' II. 248, who supposes that this region is mentioned in Ezek. xxxviii. 2, xxxix. 1). With Babylon, on the contrary, they were on friendly terms, and they appear perpetually as the allies of Merodach-Baladan and his sons, in their struggles for independence, ib. 232, &c. The suggestion therefore of Ewald that they served as auxiliaries in the Chaldæan army, in the expedition which ended in the fall of Jehoiakim, and the deportation of Jeconiah and the best of the land to Babylon, is not improbable, though there is nothing to justify us in laying to their charge any extraordinary cruelty. It was in the next year, the first of Zedekiah, that this prophecy was written, and thus it is later than those which immediately precede by seven years, but a little prior to the prophecies against Babylon, ch. li. 59, which immediately follow. It is remarkable that the words τὰ Αἰλάμ, *the Elam*, appear in the LXX. in ch. xxv. 14, followed by this prophecy, while in ch. xxvi. 1 we find, *In the beginning of the reign of king Zedekiah there was this word about Elam*, followed in *v.* 2 by the prophecy (in ch. xlvi. of the Hebr.) against Egypt. For this and because also of the absence of any allusion to Nebuchadnezzar, Movers, Hitz., and Nägelsb. have argued that its date is also the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and that it was contained in the roll. But though thus the LXX. give us a double superscription, yet they testify to the correctness of the date, and the insertion of the prophecy by them in a place, to which it manifestly does not belong, is a proof simply of the confusion which existed in the Egyptian transcripts of the prophecies relating to the nations. As the true superscription in their copy had been transposed, the words at the beginning, τὰ Αἰλάμ, were probably a marginal note to indicate its place. For further information about Elam see notes on Gen. x. 22, xiv. 1; Isai. xxii. 6; and ch. xxv. 25.

35. *the bow of Elam*] The bow was the national weapon of Elam, Isai. xxii. 6, and was therefore *the chief of their might*, that on which their strength in war depended.

36. *the four winds*] In a whirlwind violent gales seem to blow from every quarter, and whatever is exposed to their fury they seize upon, bear aloft, and scatter over the whole country. With similar violence the whole nation of Elam shall be dispersed far and wide.

the outcasts of Elam] The written text has *the outcasts of eternity*. Neumann defends this, but it is probably a mere error (עולם for עילם). Cp. note on Ps. cxliii. 3.

38. *the king and the princes*] Lit. **king and princes**. Not any particular king, as in the A. V., but Elam will lose its independence, and henceforward have no native ruler with his attendant officers.

39. *I will bring again the captivity of Elam*] We find Elam subject to Babylon, Dan. viii. 2, and its capital Shushan a favourite residence of the Persian kings, Esther i. 2. Of its subsequent fate we know little, but that the Elamites continued to exist, and were no strangers to God's mercy, is plain from members of their nation being present at Pentecost among those chosen to represent the Gentile world at the first preaching of the Gospel, Acts ii. 9.

NOTE on CHAP. XLIX. 30.

Instead of *a purpose against you*, עליכם, the C'tib has *against them*, עליהם. This is probably the right reading, though the LXX. (Cod. Alex.), the Vulg., and the Targ., have *against you* in both places, and the Syr. *against them* in both places. As Ewald shews, it marks the transition to *v.* 31, where *you* is addressed to the Chaldæans, while the Arabs are in the third person.

THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON AND RETURN OF ISRAEL FROM CAPTIVITY.

Chaps. l., li.

Many of the most distinguished German critics, including De Wette, Maurer, Knobel, and Ewald, have endeavoured to shew that this prophecy was not written by Jeremiah. Elsewhere, they say, he is the friend of the Chaldæans, who are in his eyes the ministers of the divine justice: here he is their enemy, and thirsts for their overthrow. They next attack the style: it is long, dull, flat, wearisome, destitute of plan and arrangement. Lastly there are words in it not used by Jeremiah elsewhere, and a knowledge of topography and Babylonian customs more than a prophet at Jerusalem could be expected to possess. They assume therefore that Baruch was the probable author, and that it was written at a late period of the exile. The arguments, however, for these two assumptions are singularly feeble. Thus Ewald acknowledges that the writer in chs. l. 17, li. 34 speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as being still alive: but "this could not be the case, because the king of Babylon is described in ch. li. 31 as a feeble personage." But if we turn to this verse we find that the proof of this feebleness consists in that prediction so wonderfully fulfilled, that Babylon should be captured at one end, and that messengers should thereupon hurry one after another to carry the tidings to the king. Neither then is the king Nebuchadnezzar, nor are these numerous messengers any proof of the ruler's feebleness, but describe the general confusion which ensued, when the Babylonians discovered that Cyrus and the Persians were effecting an entrance through the gates leading down to the river. The other arguments of these critics have been refuted at length by Umbreit, Graf, and others, as also have those of Movers and Hitzig, who while they grant that Jeremiah was the true author, yet assert that the prophecy has been largely interpolated, Hitzig acknowledging forty verses as genuine, while Movers leaves only twenty-nine.

The arguments for its authenticity are briefly these. First the superscription in ch. l. 1, and the appended history in ch. li. 59—64. Second, the general admission that the style is Jeremiah's, it being unlikely that any one could so closely imitate his manner with so much nevertheless of originality. As for its being dull, tedious, &c., Knobel was never tired of applying these epithets to Jeremiah. Thirdly the fact that the author was living at Jerusalem. This appears from ch. l. 5, "They shall ask their way to Zion with their faces *hitherward*." How certainly anyone not living at Jerusalem would have said *thitherward* is shewn by our translators having actually so rendered it in the A. V. One little undesigned touch like this is more convincing than elaborate arguments. No one writing at the end of the exile could have so spoken. Fourthly, the Medes and not the Persians are described as the future conquerors of Babylon, ch. li. 11, 28. Now from the time of Phaortes the Medes had been the determined enemies of Assyria. He conquered large portions of its empire, and his son Cyaxares after his death in battle was actually besieging Nineveh when the inroad of the Scythians made him desist. For twenty-eight years he bowed to the storm, but no sooner were the Scythians destroyed than he resumed his purpose, and captured and destroyed that city. Such deeds made a Median army, as Niebuhr observes, the representative of everything terrible ('Gesch. Assur.' p. 223). As a matter of fact the Medes played but a subsidiary part in the capture of Babylon, and if, as these critics argue, prophecy is a mere poetical description of past events, or at best a sagacious forecast of the future, the Persians should have been mentioned; for toward the end of the exile they had become the dominant power.

We may add that the argument drawn from the prophet's knowledge of topography, customs, &c., needs only an examination of the quoted places to demonstrate its inconclusiveness. They are as follows; corn in Babylonia was cut with a sickle at harvest time, ch. l. 16; there were kingdoms called Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, ch. li. 27; reeds grew in the Euphrates, ib. 32; the idols of Babylon were called Bel and Merodach, chs. l. 2, li. 44; and there were various classes of people there, chs. l. 35—37, li. 57. Incredible as it may seem, these are all the passages quoted: and as regards the assertion that, because one of these classes is called Sagans, the writer must therefore have lived at Babylon, it is about as conclusive as that any one who speaks of a Khédive must live at Cairo now. Jeremiah very possibly had spent some years at Babylon (see note on ch. xiii. 4); if not, he might have learnt much more than all this from the Chaldæans when they were at Jerusalem in the fourth, and again in the eleventh year of Jehoiakim: and finally there was con-

CHAPTER L.

1, 9, 21, 35 *The judgment of Babylon.* 4, 17, 33 *The redemption of Israel.*

THE word that the LORD spake against Babylon *and* against the land of the Chaldeans †by Jeremiah the prophet.

† Heb. *by the hand of Jeremiah.*

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and †set up a standard; publish, *and* conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

† Heb. *lift up.*

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stant intercourse by letter and otherwise between Babylon and Jerusalem, cp. ch. xxix. 25.

Omitting any further refutation of arguments so intrinsically weak, we must add that the prophecy is essential to the right discharge by Jeremiah of the duties of his office. He had foretold the capture and ruin of Jerusalem, not from love to Babylon, but as a necessary act of the divine justice, and as the one remedy for Judah's sins, see Note at the end of ch. xii. And he had done this in sorrow, with a heavy heart, as God's messenger; but he was a true patriot nevertheless, and had felt deep shame and indignation at the cruelties inflicted by the Chaldæans on his country. Though it had been his duty to foretell it, yet he felt none the less deeply the insult offered to his country when they cast out the body of a Jewish king with the burial of an ass: and with no little sorrow had he seen the youthful Jeconiah, with his mother, the nobles, and the choicest of the people, dragged in chains to Babylon. True that he recognized the Chaldæans as Jehovah's ministers; but they practised wanton barbarities, and claimed the glory for themselves and their gods. And thus he must complete the cycle of the divine justice (cp. ch. xxv. 26), and Babylon must be punished for its cruelty, its pride, and its idolatry.

The date is fixed by ch. li. 59. It was written before Zedekiah's journey to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign; for Jeremiah sent a copy of it to the exiles by the hands of the king's chamberlain with injunctions that after they had read it they should sink it in the Euphrates. With this agrees the internal evidence. The writer, though really dwelling at Jerusalem, regards that city as already captured and in ruins, chs. l. 11, 15, 17, 28, 29, 33, li. 11, 24, 34, 35, 51; while the exiles taught by sorrow are seeking their God in penitence, ch. l. 4—7. But the expressions are all general: there are none of those minute touches which would certainly have been found, had the city and temple been actually destroyed. Though Jehovah is twice said to take vengeance for His temple, yet nothing more express is mentioned than that strangers had entered it (ch. li. 51): while the exiles are evidently those carried away with Jeconiah, in whom the prophet had repeatedly recognized the representatives of the Jewish Church.

Though deficient in arrangement the prophecy is full of grand ideas. The fall of Babylon constantly floats before Jeremiah's mind, and he sets it forth in a succession of noble though unconnected images (cp. Introd. p. 319). How grand is the description of God opening His armoury, and taking out thence the weapons of His indignation (ch. l. 25)! How wonderful the comparison of Babylon to a volcano, pouring forth its burning lava-streams over the whole earth, and then perishing in its own flames (ch. li. 25)! How beautifully is she described as the cup of gold in God's hand, out of which He has made the nations drink of His fury (ch. li. 7, and cp. ch. xxv.), but which He is now raising His battle-mace to break in pieces (ch. li. 20)! Nor is its general import unworthy of these magnificent images. The prophet who heretofore had been God's mouthpiece to declare His counsels concerning the neighbouring states (chs. xxv. 19—25, xlvi.—xlix.), is now the messenger of justice to that mighty realm raised so suddenly to be the scourge of God's wrath, and doomed with equal rapidity to sink down and perish.

The remarkable similarity pointed out by Ewald between passages in this prophecy and Isaiah, namely, between chs. l. 27, li. 40, and Isai. xxxiv. 6 sq.; ch. l. 39 and Isai. xxxiv. 14; and li. 60 sq. and Isai. xxxiv. 16, belongs to a wider subject; for no reader can help being struck by the large knowledge which Jeremiah evidently possessed of the earlier Scriptures, and the manner in which, consciously or unconsciously, he has perpetually imitated them in his own writings.

CHAP. L. 1. *against Babylon* and *against the land of the Chaldeans*] **Concerning** *Babylon*, **concerning** *the land of the Chaldæans*. The prep. is that used in ch. xlix. 34.

2. *set up a standard*] Better, **lift up** *a standard* (marg.). Its object was to call attention to the news which the heralds were publishing.

Bel is confounded...her idols are confounded] Or, *Bel* **is ashamed**...*her images* **are ashamed**. On Bel see note on Isai. xlvi. 1.

Merodach] This deity, called in the cuneiform inscriptions Marduk, was the tutelary god of Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar, who called his son Evil-Merodach, appears to have been especially devoted to his service. He was really identical with Bel, and his equivalent among the planets was Jupiter: and as such he was styled "King of heaven and earth,"

3 For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

4 ¶ In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten.

6 My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their †restingplace.

† Heb. *place to lie down in.*

7 All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.

8 [a]Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

[a] Isai. 48. 20. chap. 51. 6. Rev. 18. 4.

"the supreme God," "King of the Gods," &c. See Schrader, p. 276.

images] The word just before translated *idols* means **images**, while this signifies shapeless blocks, and is better translated *idols* in Lev. xxvi. 30, where see note.

3. *out of the north*] Babylon, the power which once threatened Judæa from the north, ch. i. 14, now falls herself by a foe from the same quarter. On this foe see *v.* 9. Though literally fulfilled, as Media lay to the north-west of Babylon, yet this constant use of the north, the quarter where the sun never shines, and therefore the region of darkness, as that whence danger ever comes, is due probably quite as much to symbolical as to geographical reasons.

they shall remove, &c.] Translate, as in ch. ix. 10, **from man even to cattle they are fled, they are gone.**

4. *In those days...*] These words shew that the capture of Babylon, described in *v.* 2 as past, is still future.

they and the children of Judah together] The fall of Babylon is to be immediately followed by the return of the exiles homewards, in tearful procession because they go as penitents, and yet with joy because their faces are towards Zion. The cessation moreover of the schism between Israel and Judah is one of the signs of the times of the Messiah, Isai. xi. 12, 13, and symbolically represents the gathering together of all the discordant and warring empires of the world under the peaceful sceptre of the Church's King.

going and weeping: they shall go] The colon should be placed at the end of the previous clause. *Going and weeping they shall go*, means *they go ever onward weeping.*

5. *with their faces thitherward*] **Hitherward**; the writer evidently was at Jerusalem.

a perpetual, or **eternal**, *covenant*] Cp. Neh. ix. 38, x. 29.

6. *lost sheep*] This gives the reason why the people ask their way back to Zion. They have strayed from the right path, and need instruction and advice before they can recover themselves. Sheep and camels are said to be destitute of the instinct enabling them to return home possessed by oxen, goats, and most animals, and so when lost wander on indefinitely.

their shepherds...mountains] The translation of the C'tib is *Their shepherds, i. e.* civil rulers, ch. ii. 8, *have led them astray upon the seducing mountains.* The allusion is to the mountains being the usual places where idolatry was practised. But see Note at end of Chapter.

their restingplace] Lit. *the place where they crouch down*, their fold. Thus while wandering from mountain to hill in their eagerness after the pleasures of idolatry they have forgotten Him who folds His people in grassy pastures, Ps. xxiii. 2.

7. *We offend not*] See note on ch. ii. 3. As long as the sheep are in the fold, it is a trespass to attack them, and is punished as such. But Israel having left the fold, has now no owner, and may therefore be maltreated with impunity.

habitation of justice] In ch. xxxi. 23 this name is applied to Jerusalem: here, by the repetition of *Lord*, the prophet emphatically declares that Jehovah alone is the true pasturage, in whom His people will find safety, rest, and plenty. See note on ch. vi. 2.

8. In *vv.* 4—7 Jeremiah has cast a hasty glance upon the repentance of Israel, and their abandonment of the sins into which their rulers had led them: he now returns to his proper subject, the fall of Babylon. And

9 ¶ For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty ‖expert man; none shall return in vain.

‖ Or, *destroyer.*

10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.

11 Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown †fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls;

† Heb. *big, or, corpulent*

12 Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

13 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: [b] every one

[b] chap. 49 17.

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whereas in *v.* 3 he had described her as deserted by all her inhabitants, he now speaks especially of the Israelites, because Babylon's fall was the indispensable condition of their deliverance. So firmly nevertheless had the Jews settled themselves in Babylon under Jeremiah's counsels, that they were the last to abandon the place. "Up to the time when Seifeddaulet founded Hillah about A. C. 1100, in place of the ancient city of Babylon," says Oppert as quoted by Nägelsb., "the Jews had remained the sole inhabitants of the city, or rather of its ruins."

the he goats] This word (עתודים) properly means *armed, equipped*, and so is applied to the leading male, whether *ram*, Gen. xxxi. 10, buck, or he-goat. Here, as the word translated *flocks* usually signifies *sheep*, it should be rendered **rams**. In the note on Isai. xiv. 9, where its metaphorical meaning is pointed out, a good translation is offered in *bell-wethers*. See also Zech. x. 3.

9. *I will raise*] Or, **stir up**, *awaken*, see note on ch. vi. 22; Isai. xli. 2; and cp. Joel iii. 7, 9.

an assembly of great nations] Oriental monarchies never attempted to weld the subject races into an organic whole, and thus the Medo-Persian empire was as mere an aggregate of discordant nations as that of Babylon, for which see introd. to ch. xxv.

from thence] From the north, *i.e.* by the great nations coming thence. The rendering of Rosenm. &c., *from that time*, arises from his attaching this clause too closely to the words *they shall array themselves*. There is no proof that the adv. is ever so used of time.

a mighty expert man] But in the marg. *destroyer*. The A. V. with the Syr., LXX. and most editions reads *maschil*, an expert, and therefore successful warrior. This word is in common use and gives a good meaning. The marg. with the Vulg. and Targ. and three old editions reads *mashchil*, one who makes childless, and so a *destroyer*. The word occurs elsewhere only in Hos. ix. 14, and not even there in the required sense, and is to be rejected.

none shall return in vain] A proverbial expression for ill success, referring not to the arrows but to the warriors. Cp. 2 S. i. 22; Isai. lv. 11.

11. *Because ye were glad*] Or, *For thou wast glad*. As both sense and grammar shew, this verse is closely connected with *v.* 10, and gives the reason why Chaldæa is spoiled. Chaldæa there is lit. *Chaldæans*, but as the people are put for the country the verb is fem. sing., and so is the verb here. *Chaldæa shall become a spoil...for thou wast glad, thou exultedst* (cp. Ps. xciv. 3, where the A. V. has *triumph*), *ye* **plunderers** *of mine heritage*. It is this sudden change of numbers which has made the Masorites substitute the pl.

because ye are grown fat, marg. *big or corpulent*] Rather, **for thou leapedst**, *skippedst*. By comparing the renderings *spread themselves* in Hab. i. 8, and *grow up* in Mal. iv. 2, with the two given here, it becomes plain that the translators of the A. V. were uncertain what the meaning of the verb is. In all places it signifies *to make springs and bounds* as an animal does when playing.

as the heifer at grass] Or, *as a heifer* **threshing**. When threshing the cattle were allowed to eat their fill (Deut. xxv. 4), and so grew playful. See Note at end of Chapter.

bellow as bulls] **Neigh as steeds** (marg.). So the verb means to *neigh*, in ch. v. 8, and for the noun see chs. viii. 16, xlvii. 3.

12. *Your mother, i.e.* Babylon, *shall be sore confounded*] Or, **ashamed**. In the next clause *shall be ashamed* more correctly signifies *shall blush*.

behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be *a wilderness*] The inserted words spoil the sense. Translate with the Vulg. *Behold, she is the hindermost of the nations, a desert, a thirsty land, and a waste*. It thus gives the reason why Babylon is to blush. Once the head of gold; she is now the lowest and meanest of earthly powers.

13. Except the first clause this verse is taken from chs. xix. 8, xlix. 17, where see notes.

that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

14 Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.

15 Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it *is* the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her.

16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the ‖sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

‖ Or, *the.*

17 ¶ Israel *is* a scattered sheep; the lions have driven *him* away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

19 And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.

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14. *Put yourselves*, &c.] The colon must be placed after *ye that bend the bow*. The archers are to post themselves round Babylon to shoot at those who man the walls. For the phrase rendered *bend the bow*, see ch. xlvi. 9.

15. *Shout against her*] Spoken of the war-cry. So in Isai. xlii. 13, where God is compared to a warrior, it is said *He shall shout* (A. V. *cry*), *i.e.* raise the war-cry.

she hath given her hand] *i.e.* she hath made the sign of submission, cp. 1 Chro. xxix. 24 marg.; 2 Chro. xxx. 8 marg.; Ezra x. 19. Strictly it would imply a capitulation upon terms, Ezek. xvii. 18, but probably it means here that Babylon stretches out her hand in token that she is ready to yield. So Turnus when praying for life says to Æneas, "Vicisti, et victum tendere palmas Ausonii videre," Virg. 'Æn.' XII. 936.

her foundations] This word, though common in the cognate dialects in the sense of foundations, occurs only here in Hebr., and its spelling is very uncertain. As foundations cannot be said to fall, it probably means *buttresses*. The LXX. render it *battlements*.

16. *Cut off the sower...*] The population is to be destroyed so utterly that the rich fields of Babylonia, said by Herodotus (III. 5) to yield two-hundredfold, are to remain untilled. When the inhabitants of a land are few, they become nomads, and maintain life by pasturing cattle, Isai. vii. 21—25. This prediction is not to be confined with Nägelsb. to the spaces left vacant within the walls of Babylon for the purpose of raising food in case of a siege (Q. Curt. v. 1), but belongs to the whole of Babylonia. *Sickle* is better than the word in the marg. *scythe:* for, as it is applied in Joel iii. 13 to the hook for cutting grapes, it was evidently a small instrument. The *harvest* there means the vintage.

the oppressing sword] See notes on chs. xxv. 38, xlvi. 16.

they shall turn] These words are taken from Isai. xiii. 14. When we remember that it had been the policy of Nebuchadnezzar to compel citizens selected from the vanquished nations to settle in Babylonia, we see the full force of the words.

17. *Israel* is *a scattered sheep*] In the previous verse the prophet described the depopulation of Babylonia, caused not merely by the sword of the enemy, but also by the flight homewards of the colonists who had been dragged from their own countries to settle there. Naturally upon this the thought rises before his mind of Israel, forced like the rest to colonize Babylonia, returning home. But in what evil plight! *Israel* has not been dwelling together in one region as in Egypt, but is *a scattered sheep*, *i.e.* is like a flock which has been scared and driven in all directions; for **lions have chased him**. There is no article in the Hebr. For the verb rendered *driven away*, cp. chs. xxiii. 2, xlix. 5.

first the king, &c.] Rather, **the first** lion *ate him, even the king of Assyria; and* **this one, the last,** *hath picked his bones* (lit. *hath boned him*), *even Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babel.* When the kings of Assyria warred with Israel, it was a rich and numerous people: but the constant wasting of the land had so lessened their numbers, that Nebuchadnezzar had but the bones to pick. See ch. lii. 28—30.

19. *his habitation*] In the Hebr. the metaphor is maintained throughout. *I will bring Israel*, the scared sheep, *back to his pasturage* (see on *v.* 7), *and he shall graze upon Carmel and Bashan; and on mount Ephraim and Gilead his soul shall be satisfied.* The places named are the districts of Palestine most famous for their rich herbage.

20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

21 ¶ Go up against the land ‖of Merathaim, *even* against it, and against the inhabitants of ‖Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded thee.

22 A sound of battle *is* in the land, and of great destruction.

23 How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

25 The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

26 Come against her †from the utmost border, open her storehouses: ‖cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left.

‖ Or, *of the rebels.*

‖ Or, *visitation.*

† Heb. *from the end.*

‖ Or, *tread her.*

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20. *In those days...*] This promise of pardon and removal of sin belongs to the days of the Messiah, and it is introduced by the usual Messianic formula.

whom I reserve] Or, *whom I permit to remain.* It is the verb from which *remnant* is derived, a word pregnant with meaning in the language of the prophets. See note on *Shear-yashuv* in Isai. viii. 18.

21. *the land of Merathaim*] Not *of the rebels* (marg.), but **of double rebellion.** Like Mitsraïm, *i.e.* the two Egypts, Yerushalaïm, Kirjathaim, Sharaim, Adithaim, Aram-Naharaïm, *i.e.* Syria of the two rivers, or Mesopotamia, it is a dual; but why Babylon should be so called is very uncertain. The simplest explanation of the name is that the dual ending is intensive, and that it means the land of very great rebelliousness. So *double* is an intensive in Isai. xl. 2, lxi. 7; Jer. xvii. 18. As however a part of Babylonia was called Pekod (see next note), it is possible that Merathaim may also have been a real name, and that Jeremiah was playing upon it.

the inhabitants of Pekod] *i.e.* **of visitation**, or punishment. A Pekod is mentioned in the cylinder of Sennacherib near the Hauran, Schrader, 237, 276; and Lenormant, 'Les prem. Civ.' II. 246, says it was the collective name of the tribes of Roukha, Khindar, Yatbour, and Bonqoud. Cp. Ezek. xxiii. 23. A Babylonian town, Nahar-Pekod, *i.e.* Pekod-river, is written Nahar Pakor by Neubauer, 'Géogr. du Talmud,' p. 363.

waste] Rather, *slay*. The verb, as explained by many commentators, is formed from the Hebr. word for a *sword*.

23. *the hammer*] Cp. ch. xxiii. 29. Babylon, by whose instrumentality Jehovah had crushed the nations, is now *cut asunder*, *i.e.* the head of iron or bronze is cut away from the wooden handle, and broken; and the head itself beaten to fragments by some mightier weapon.

24. *I have laid a snare for thee*] Babylon, the impregnable, was taken by Cyrus by a stratagem, for which its own rulers had made elaborate preparation. Having diverted the waters of the Euphrates into a lake dug to receive its overflowings, he entered the city by the river channel so unexpectedly, that its capture remained for a time unknown to most of the inhabitants (Herod. I. 191). Cp. Isai. xlv. 1.

and thou wast not aware] Better lit., **and thou didst not know it.**

25. *The LORD hath opened...*] By a grand figure the prophet describes Jehovah as opening His armoury, wherein lie stored up war and famine, pestilence, disease and death; and with these He arms Himself that in person He may execute justice upon the wicked city.

for this is *the work*] Rather, **for my Lord Jehovah of hosts hath a work to do in the land of the Chaldæans.** At the time when the A. V. was made, it was not understood that in Hebr. and other Shemitic tongues, as also in the Egyptian, the personal pronouns serve for the copula. Hence the mistaken use of the italics *am*, *art*, *is*, &c. In this place the word rendered *this* really means *is*, and the Hebr. lit. signifies *for a business is to my Lord Jehovah of hosts in the land of the Chaldæans.*

26. *Come against her*] *Come* **to** *her.* Babylon is fallen: Jehovah has Himself captured the city; and not warriors only, but people of every kind, are to gather unto her to plunder her. *Her storehouses* are lit. *her* **granaries.**

cast her up as heaps] The word means *heaps of rubbish* in Neh. iv. 2, but is more strictly *a heap of corn*, Song of Sol. vii. 2, or

27 Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

28 The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple.

29 Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

30 Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD.

31 Behold, I *am* against thee, O *thou* †most proud, saith the Lord GOD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee. † Heb. *pride.*

32 And †the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him. † Heb. *pride.*

33 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah *were* oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go.

34 Their Redeemer *is* strong; the LORD of hosts *is* his name: he shall

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of *sheaves*, Ruth iii. 7. The clause therefore follows naturally upon what precedes. The granaries of Babylon are to be burst open, the corn piled up in heaps, and finally they are to *devote her to destruction, i.e.* to burn her wealth with fire. Cp. Josh. xi. 12, 13. There is no authority for the marginal rendering *tread her.*

let nothing of her be left] Lit. **let her have no remnant.** See note on *v.* 20, and contrast Judah's promise, ch. v. 10.

27. *Slay all her bullocks*] For *slay*, see note on *v.* 21, where it is rendered *waste. Her bullocks*, or steers, are her strong youths, who *go down to the slaughter* as in ch. xlviii. 15.

28. *The voice of them...*] *i.e. There is a sound*, a sound is heard of fugitives escaping from Babylonia. Chief among these would be the Jews, who in the fall of Babylon saw Jehovah's *vengeance for His temple.*

29. *Call together the archers*] This repetition of the summons in *v.* 14 is occasioned by a new treatment of the subject commencing with this verse, and continued to the end of ch. li. 26. In this portion of the prophecy the capture of Babylon is regarded as the punishment due to her for burning the temple, see end of *v.* 28. The word *archers* is rendered in the ancient versions both here and in Job xvi. 13 by its ordinary sense of *many.* Rashi first suggested the rendering *archers*, and the philological reasons for it are tenable. But the arrangement of the A.V. is wrong. It should be *Summon ye the archers* **to** *Babylon, even all who bend the bow: encamp against* **her**, &c. On the method of encamping see note on ch. vi. 6.

30. This verse has occurred before of Damascus, ch. xlix. 26.

31. O thou *most proud*] Lit. **O Pride** (marg.). Babylon is here called Pride, just as in *v.* 21 she was called Double-rebellion, and Punishment.

32. *And the most proud*] *And* **Pride** *shall stumble*, &c.

shall raise him up] Or, **her** *up.* And so afterwards it should be **her** *cities;* and *round about* **her.** There is an unnecessary ambiguity in the A.V. from the use of the pronoun in three genders. Babylon is fem. in *vv.* 26, 27, neut. and fem. in *v.* 29, and masc. here. In the Hebr. Babylon is fem. throughout except here, where the pronoun is masc. to agree with Pride: but the fem. should still be used for the sake of perspicuity.

33. were *oppressed*] The prophet is describing the present state of the exiles; *The children of Israel and the children of Judah* **are** *oppressed together: and all their captors have laid firm hold upon them: they have refused to let them go.* The verse gives the reason why Babylon must fall. The restoration of Israel and Judah to their land is as necessary now for the fulfilment of God's promises to all mankind, as was their deliverance in old time from Egypt. As Babylon therefore will not let them go, it must be broken, and its empire destroyed.

34. *Their Redeemer...*] This is but part of the meaning of the Hebrew word Goel. Jehovah is Israel's next relative, bound by law to avenge him, as well as to ransom him from captivity. See notes on Num. xxxv. 12; Job xix. 25. It was the Goel's duty also to plead his kinsman's cause. How thoroughly Jehovah

throughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

35 ¶ A sword *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise *men*.

36 A sword *is* upon the ‖ †liars; and they shall dote: a sword *is* upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

‖ Or, *chief stays.* † Heb. *bars.*

37 A sword *is* upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that *are* in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword *is* upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

38 A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols.

39 Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell *there*, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

40 [c] As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD; *so* shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

[c] Gen. 19. 25. chap. 49. 18.

41 Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

42 They shall hold the bow and the lance: they *are* cruel, and will not shew mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, *every one* put in array,

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will execute this duty for Israel is shewn in the Hebr. by the triple repetition of the same word, lit. *in pleading He will plead their plea.*

that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet...] Rather, *to the earth.* Babylon has hitherto by its ambition kept the world in unrest: now by its fall men everywhere can dwell in security. The Syr., Rashi, &c. support the A.V. in taking the two verbs in contrast: less appropriately the Vulg. and Targ., followed by Ewald, take them as parallel in sense, *to stir up the earth and make the inhabitants of Babylon to tremble.*

35. *A sword* is *upon...*] There is no verb, and these verses are far more forcible if taken as a summons from Jehovah, Israel's Goel, to the sword to fall upon all the elements of Babylon's greatness. The *princes* were her rulers at home and her generals in war. The *wise men* were the Chaldæans, upon whose learning she so prided herself, Dan. i. 4, and who by their knowledge of the stars guided her counsels. See note on ch. li. 57.

36. *the liars*] See note on ch. xlviii. 30. It means here soothsayers, fortune-tellers, &c., who in the popular estimation came next to the wise men.

37. *their horses...their chariots*] There is a change here in the pronoun, but it is to the masc. sing., **his** *horses...***his** *chariots*, *i.e.* the king's, to whom the army belonged. But it would be simpler, with many commentators, to treat the change of pronoun as unimportant, and refer it to Babylon, rendering *her horses*, &c.

the mingled people] *i.e.* the foreigners serving as mercenaries in her army, see note on ch. xxv. 20.

38. *A drought*] More probably *a sword.* The consonants are the same, but the Masorites have given the word different vowels because drought seemed a more suitable term for waters. But sword means war, and the stratagem of Cyrus by which the waters of the Euphrates were diverted, and the channel left dry, was the effect not of drought, but of military skill and forethought.

for it is *the land*] Or, *for it is a land of carved images.*

they are mad upon their *idols*] Omit *their.* The word for *idols*, lit. *terrors*, Ps. lxxxviii. 16, is used in this one place only of objects of worship. Probably it refers to those monstrous and grotesque forms which the depraved imagination of many heathen nations invented as representations of their deities. Cp. Dan. iii. 1.

39. *wild beasts of the desert*] See note on Isai. xiii. 21. Instead of taking it as a general name for the wild beasts which inhabit the desert, Ewald, Umbreit, &c. follow Bochart in translating it *wild cats.*

wild beasts of the islands] Lit. *wailers*, *i.e.* **jackals**, Isai. xiii. 22, Tristram, 'N. H. of B.' 109. The A.V. has mistaken the derivation of the word.

owls] **Ostriches**, Isai. xiii. 21, Tristram, 235.

40. A repetition of ch. xlix. 18.

41—43. An application to Babylon of the

like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, *and* pangs as of a woman in travail.

[d] chap. 49. 19.

44 Behold, he shall come up [d]like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who *is* a chosen *man*, *that* I may appoint over her? for who *is* like me? and [e]who will [‖]appoint me the time? and who *is* that shepherd that will stand before me?

[e] Job 41. 10. chap. 49. 19.

[‖] Or, *convent me to plead?*

45 Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make *their* habitation desolate with them.

46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

doom threatened against Jerusalem in ch. vi. 22—24. The differences in the Hebr. are very slight.

44—46. A similar application to Babylon of what was said of Edom in ch. xlix. 19—21. The only change is in *v.* 46, where besides the omission of the mention of the Red Sea, which would be unsuitable here, the whole verse is made more exactly applicable to Babylon, and lit. translated is *At the cry "Babylon is captured" the earth quakes, and a cry for aid is heard among the nations.*

NOTES on CHAP. L. 6, 11.

6. The C'tib reads הָרִים שׁוֹבָבִים *the mountains which lead astray, seductive mountains.* The other way of spelling the word הָרִים שׁוֹבְבִים would mean *backsliding, apostate mountains*, rendered by Fürst *outlying, distant mountains.* The Kri, supported by the versions, reads שׁוֹבָבוּם, *they have led them astray.* But whereever the C'tib gives a fair sense it is to be preferred. Just before we have an example of the little value to be attached to these corrections of the Masorites. The Hebr. is *a flock lost was my people. Lost*, אבדות, is pl. f., because *flock* is a collective noun signifying *sheep.* The next word היה, *was*, the Masorites have changed into היו, *they were*, probably because *people* is also a collective, signifying *men.* But the change is, to say the least, unnecessary.

11. The translation of the A.V. *the heifer at grass* is supported by the LXX. and Vulg., but implies the reading דָּשֵׁא which probably is right. But the Hebr. text as it stands has דָּשָׁא, the fem. part. with the Aramaic א for ה of the verb דּוּשׁ, *to trample out corn upon the threshing-floor.*

CHAPTER LI.

1 *The severe judgment of God against Babylon in revenge of Israel.* 59 *Jeremiah delivereth the book of this prophecy to Seraiah, to be cast into Euphrates, in token of the perpetual sinking of Babylon.*

THUS saith the LORD; Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the [†]midst of them that rise up against me, a destroying wind;

[†] Heb. *heart.*

CHAP. LI. 1. *against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me*] Or, *against the inhabitants of Chaldæa.* The Hebrew lit. is *against the inhabitants of leb kamai, i.e.* of *the heart of my risers up*, but read according to the cypher Atbash, on which see ch. xxv. 26, *lebkamai* becomes *Chasdim, i.e.* the Chaldæans, and is so translated by the LXX. Though strange to us the phrase *inhabiters of Chaldæans* is that regularly used in Hebr. for *the inhabitants of Chaldæa*, and occurs twice in this chapter, in *vv.* 24, 35. We are not to suppose that this cipher was invented by Jeremiah, or that he used it here for concealment. On the contrary it is probable that it was first devised either for political purposes or for trade, and was in time largely employed in the correspondence between the exiles at Babylon and their friends at home. And thus words in common use like Sheshach, and Lebkamai, would be known to everybody.

a destroying wind] Many translate *the spirit of a destroyer*, understanding thereby Cyrus: their argument being that the words rendered *to raise up a wind* always mean elsewhere *to stir up the spirit* of anyone (as here in *v.* 11). But the LXX., Syr., and Vulg., all support the A.V., and this interpretation is perfectly natural, and seems required by what

2 And will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.

3 Against *him that* bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against *him that* lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host.

4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and *they that are* thrust through in her streets.

5 For Israel *hath* not *been* forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

[a] chap. 50. 8. Rev. 18. 4. 6 [a]Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this *is* the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

7 Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.

[b] Isai. 21. 9. Rev. 14. 8. & 18. 2. 8 Babylon is suddenly [b]fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up *even* to the skies.

10 The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

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follows. *Wind* and *spirit* are represented both in Hebr. and Greek by the same word, and it is not always easy to say which is the right sense, see note on Gen. i. 2.

2. *fanners, that shall fan her*] This translation, which has the support of the versions, is by all means to be retained. See Note at end of Chapter.

shall empty her land] See note on ch. xix. 7.

3. *Against* him that *bendeth*...] In this much controverted passage nothing better than the rendering of the A.V. has been offerred, except that for *archer* the literal word **bender** should be substituted. The Masorites expunge *let him bend*, possibly because the pronoun *him that* (אשר) is omitted before the first verb, and consequently there is a grammatical difficulty, though not a serious one. The man who *bends the bow*, and the heavy-armed soldier who lifts himself up, *i.e.* vaunts himself in his coat of mail (see note on ch. xlvi. 4), represent the Babylonians who defend the city, and who are to be slaughtered without mercy.

4. *Thus the slain*...] *Slain* is the predicate. Translate *And they*, *i.e.* the young men who form her host, see *v.* 3, *shall fall slain in the land of the Chaldæans, and pierced through in her streets*, *i.e.* the streets of Babylon, regarded as equivalent to the land of the Chaldæans.

5. *Israel* hath *not* been *forsaken*] Or, Israel is not widowed nor Judah of its God; cp. ch. iii. 14. On *sin*, or **guilt**, see note on *âshâm* in ch. ii. 3.

6. *be not cut off*] See note on ch. l. 30, and cp. viii. 14.

7. *Babylon* hath been...] Lit. *A golden cup is Babel in the hand of Jehovah, intoxicating the whole earth.* For the metaphor see ch. xxv. 15, 16. Jeremiah beholds her as she is now in her splendour, but the wine whereof she makes the nations drink is the wrath of God, cp. Rev. xvii. 4. As God's hammer, ch. l. 23, Babylon was strong: as His cup of gold, she was rich and beautiful, but neither saves her from ruin.

8. *destroyed*] Lit. *broken*, as was the hammer in ch. l. 23. The cup, though of metal, is thrown down so violently as to be shattered by the fall.

howl for her] The persons addressed are the many inhabitants of Babylon who were dragged from their homes to people its void places, and especially the Israelites. They have dwelt there long enough to feel pity for her, when they contrast her past magnificence with her terrible fall. Cp. ch. xxix. 7.

9. *We would have healed*...] Lit. *We have healed Babylon, and she is not healed*, *i.e.* we have done all that lay in our power to heal her. And now convinced that her ruin is irretrievable, they determine to leave her and depart to their several homes.

to the skies] Or, *to the* **clouds**. The word signifies the light mists which float high in the atmosphere.

10. *The* LORD *hath brought forth our righteousness*] The word is pl., and means that Jehovah hath brought to the light

11 Make † bright the arrows; gather the shields: the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device *is* against Babylon, to destroy it; because it *is* the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.

12 Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the † ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

13 O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness.

14 [c] The LORD of hosts hath sworn † by himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillers; and they shall † lift up a shout against thee.

15 [d] He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.

16 When he uttereth *his* voice, *there is* a ‖ multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

17 [e] Every man ‖ is brutish by *his* knowledge; every founder is con-

Heb. *pure.*

Heb. *liers in wait.*

[c] Amos 6. 8.

† Heb. *by his soul.*

† Heb. *utter.*

[d] Gen. 1. 1, 6. chap. 10. 12, &c.

‖ Or, *noise.*

[e] chap. 10. 14.

‖ Or, *is more brutish than to know.*

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those things which prove us to be righteous: *i.e.* by punishing Babylon He hath justified us. We are now acquitted, and delivered from our prison-house, and may go home to Zion to declare there what God hath done for us.

11. *Make bright*] Rather, **Sharpen** *the arrows.*

gather the shields] For *shields* the LXX. and Vulg. render *quivers*, and though their united authority is very great, yet, as shewn in the note on 2 S. viii. 7, *shield* is the most probable rendering, being confirmed by the Chaldee. See Levy, 'Chald. Wörterb.' under שלמא. The verb lit. is *fill the shields*, *i.e.* take hold of them, fill them with your bodies; cp. *he filled his hand with a bow*, 2 K. ix. 24 (marg.), where see note.

the kings of the Medes] The Medes, the Madai of Gen. x. 2, were a branch of the great Aryan family, who as conquerors had seized upon the vast regions extending from the Caspian Sea to the eastern borders of Mesopotamia, but without being able to dispossess the Turanian tribes who had previously dwelt there. They were divided into numerous clans, each with its own local chief, the leaders of the larger sections being those who are here called kings. See Lenormant, 'Manuel,' III. 332.

12. *upon the walls of Babylon*] Rather, *against the walls.* The A.V. takes the word ironically, as a summons to Babylon to prepare for her defence, followed by the triumphant declaration that all defence is in vain. More probably it is a summons to the army to make the attack; but Jeremiah so constantly interchanges the prepositions *towards*, and *upon* (אל and על), that it is quite possible that the A.V. (which has the support of the LXX. and Vulg.) is right. The rest of the verse is applicable either to the besiegers enclosing the city with their outposts, or to the besieged maintaining their line of defence.

prepare the ambushes] Lit. *post the liers in wait.* These rather belong to the besiegers, their object being to destroy the sallying parties of the besieged, Josh. viii. 14 sqq.; Judg. xx. 33 sqq.

13. *upon many waters*] The great wealth of Babylonia was caused not merely by the Euphrates, but by a vast system of canals, which both drained the marshes, and carried the waters to every part of the land. They served also for defence as well as for irrigation.

the measure of thy covetousness] Lit. *the ell of thy gain*, *i.e.* the appointed measure and end of thy gain. This rendering agrees best with the previous reference to the wealth of Babylon. But as *gain* lit. means *cutting off*, some commentators follow the Vulg. in rendering *the ell of thy cutting off*, *i.e.* the appointed measure at which thou art to be cut off, at which thy web of existence is to be severed from the loom.

14. *Surely I will...*] Rather, *Surely I* **have filled** *thee with men as with locusts, and they shall* **sing over thee the vintage-song.** The vintage-shout suggests the idea of trampling Babylon under foot, as the vintagers trample the grapes, a metaphor always used in Scripture of the divine wrath.

15—19. These verses are a transcript verbatim of ch. x. 12—16, except that *Israel* is omitted in *v.* 19. As the word is found in the Targ. and Vulg. its omission may be due to the carelessness of some copyist, but the sense

founded by the graven image: for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

18 They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

19 *f* The portion of Jacob *is* not like them; for he *is* the former of all things: and *Israel is* the rod of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts *is* his name.

f chap. 10. 16.

20 Thou *art* my battle axe *and* weapons of war: for ‖with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;

‖ Or, *in thee*, or, *by thee.*

21 And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider;

22 With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid;

23 I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.

24 And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD.

25 Behold, I *am* against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I

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is good without it. Though the contrast between Jehovah and the powerless idols of the heathen, suggests that idolatry was the cause of Babylon's downfall, still the connection of this long quotation with what precedes and follows is not very clear. This however is not a sufficient reason for rejecting (with Hitzig and others) the whole passage as an interpolation.

20—24. These verses should be translated:

Thou art my mall, weapons of war;
And with thee I break in pieces nations,
And with thee I destroy kingdoms,
And with thee I break in pieces the horse and its rider,
And with thee I break in pieces the chariot and its driver,
And with thee I break in pieces man and woman,
And with thee I break in pieces old man and boy,
And with thee I break in pieces young man and maiden,
And with thee I break in pieces the shepherd and his flock,
And with thee I break in pieces the ploughman and his team,
And with thee I break in pieces governors and chiefs;
And I will render, &c.

For the mall or mace, see Prov. xxv. 18. It differs from the hammer of ch. l. 23 only in being used for warlike purposes. Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' I. 459, says that the mace was among the weapons used both by the soldiers, and by the Assyrian monarchs themselves, while it is only in the very latest sculptures that the battle-axe is found used for any other purpose except the felling of trees. There is a difficulty as to the tense employed, but it is justified by Graf on the ground that the crushing of the nations was going on at the time when the prophet wrote.

It is much disputed who is the person described in these verses as the mace of God. Grotius thought it was Cyrus and the Medes; Ewald argues for Israel; Calmet followed by most commentators considered that it was Babylon. This upon the whole is most in agreement with the context.

23. *captains*] See notes on 1 K. x. 15; Ezra viii. 36. Benfey derives this word, Hebr. *Pakha*, from the Sanskrit *Paksha*, *companion*, and though of Aryan extraction it is also found in Arabic, being the title we call Pasha.

rulers] Hebr. *seganim*. See note on Isai. xli. 25.

As these Pashas and Sagans were Babylon's own vassals, the question arises how she could be said to break them in pieces? Probably in the short-lived duration of her empire she was constructive only in the capital, destructive everywhere else. In the capital Nebuchadnezzar gathered numerous inhabitants and great riches, but in so doing drained of their men and wealth both the kingdoms he had conquered and his own dominions. Upon her destructiveness the prophet dwells at length. In *v.* 21 she crushes armies, cavalry, and war-chariots; in *v.* 22 she destroys the population; while in *v.* 23 she annihilates agriculture, and finally the governors and viceroys of her own subject-states.

25. *O destroying mountain*] In 2 K. xxiii. 13 the Mount of Olives is called *a destroying mountain*, because of the idolatrous shrines set up there by Solomon: but here the words

will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.

26 And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be †desolate for ever, saith the LORD.

Heb. *everlasting desolations.*

27 Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers.

28 Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion.

29 And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

30 The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they have re-

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that follow prove that the prophet meant a volcano, which by its flames and hot lava-streams *destroys the whole land*. For first, God *rolls it down from the rocks*, which words can scarcely refer to anything else than to the descent of the ejected stones and lava down its steep sides: and then He makes it *a burnt mountain*, lit. *a mount of burning*, *i.e.* either one from which fire proceeds, or better, with the A. V., a burnt-out mountain, of which the crater alone remains, where, however, the smouldering fires prevent the builder from quarrying the rock for stone. Such was Babylon. Its destructive energy under Nebuchadnezzar was like the first outbreak of volcanic fires, its rapid collapse under his successors was as the same volcano when its flames have burnt out, and its crater is falling in upon itself. Prof. Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' I. 189, describes a remarkable volcanic hill on the river Khabour in Western Assyria, "composed entirely of loose lava, scoriæ, and ashes, and rising to the height of 300 feet." Its name Koukab, said to signify a jet of fire, "is even thought to imply that the volcano may have been active within the time to which the traditions of the country extend."

26. *a stone for a corner*] Babylon was as a matter of fact built of brick, but the prophet keeps to his metaphor, and his meaning is that (1) it would never again be the seat of empire. Alexander did purpose to make it a corner stone of his dominions, but died prematurely. Nor (2) would any new development of events take its rise thence. Its one eruption had exhausted it.

27. *Set ye up a standard*] See on *v.* 12.

prepare the nations] See note on ch. vi. 4 and cp. ch. xxii. 7: the same word is used below in *v.* 28.

Ararat] See notes on Gen. viii. 4; 2 K. xix. 37; Isai. xxxvii. 38; and 'Anc. Mon.' I. 207, II. 280.

Minni] Probably the western portion of Armenia, as Ararat was that in the centre and on the east. See 'Anc. Mon.' II. 112. Armenia was at this time subject to Media, Herod. I. 102, 103.

Ashchenaz] See note on Gen. x. 3.

a captain] Hebr. *tiphsar*. This word elsewhere occurs only in Nahum iii. 17. In both places it is compared to locusts, and the LXX. in Nahum translate it ὁ συμμικτός, *a mingled mass of people*. Though they were not sure of this rendering, for here they have βελοστάσεις, *stations for shooting darts*, yet it is the best sense offered. The supposition that it means a satrap, by transposition from a Persian word, is highly improbable. The rendering of the A. V., *captain*, depends upon the idea that it is a compound of *sar*, *captain*, with some word of unknown meaning. Meier, 'Hebr. Wurzelwört.' p. 653, explains it as meaning *that which is brought together*, and so a *host*, *troop*, and says, "all attempts to explain it from the Persian suit neither its form nor its meaning."

the rough caterpillers] *i.e.* locusts in their third stage, when their wings are still enveloped in rough horny cases, which stick up upon their backs. It is in this stage that they are so destructive, as the old ones only come to deposit their eggs, and do no great damage. See Credner on Joel i. 4.

28. *kings of the Medes*] See on *v.* 11.

the captains...the rulers] Lit. *the pashas and sagans*, as in *v.* 23, where see note.

his dominion] The sing. is used because the dominion belonged not to the subordinate rulers, but to the chief, *e.g.* to Cyrus.

29. *shall tremble*] The prophet describes God's purpose as accomplished, and the A. V. notices this in the next three verses, and rightly translates the verbs in the past. Here alone it uses the future. The lit. translation is,

Then the earth quaked and writhed;
For the thoughts of Jehovah against Babel have stood fast;
To make Babel a waste without inhabitant.

For *quaked* cp. ch. l. 46, and for *writhed* ch. iv. 19.

30. *have forborn to fight*] Or, **have ceased**

mained in *their* holds: their might hath failed; they became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; her bars are broken.

31 One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end,

32 And that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

33 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon *is* like a threshingfloor, ‖ *it is* time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come. ‖ Or, *in the time that he thresheth her.*

34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out.

35 †The violence done to me and to my ‖flesh *be* upon Babylon, shall the †inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. † Heb. *My violence.* ‖ Or, *remainder.* † Heb. *inhabitress.*

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to fight. The word does not imply cowardice, but the despair that seizes warriors when they see that the conflict is hopeless. Abandoning all further resistance *they sit in the strongholds* to await the end. The word properly means an acropolis, see note on ch. xlviii. 41, and so any inaccessible place of refuge. Next, *their heroism, i.e.* not their strength, but their courage, *is dried up.* The verb occurs elsewhere only in Isai. xix. 5; xli. 17. And so finally *they have become as women,* heroism, *i.e.* manliness, being the moral differentia of the two sexes. Cp. ch. l. 37.

they have burned...] *i.e.* the enemy have burned.

bars] *i.e.* the fortifications generally, cp. Amos i. 5.

31. *One post shall run to meet another*] Jeremiah represents the city as having been simultaneously captured at various places, from each of which a messenger runs to the royal palace, itself a strong fortification on the bank of the Euphrates in the heart of the city. They thus seem to meet one another.

at one *end*] The phrase rather means *from all sides*, entirely, completely. Cp. ch. l. 26, and see note on Isai. lvi. 11.

32. *And that the passages are stopped*] **Are seized,** *occupied*, see ch. xlviii. 41. The *passages* here cannot be fords, as in Gen. xxxii. 23; Judg. iii. 28, for the Euphrates was too deep for fording, but may mean ferries. There was only one bridge at Babylon built by Nebuchadnezzar to unite the palace with the temple of Bel; but at right angles with the river were the main streets, at the end of each of which were gates and probably steps leading down to the river, and so the people were carried across in boats. Cp. Herod. i. 186. When Cyrus captured the city his troops moved down the bed of the river and occupied all these ferries, finding at each of them the gates negligently left open.

the reeds] Lit. *the marshes* or pools which formed an important part of the defences of Babylon, see Herod. i. 185. As the pools could not literally be burnt, the A.V. follows Kimchi in understanding by them the reeds which grew there, but many recent commentators, with Keil, adopt the explanation given by Calvin, who says, "The prophet shews in a hyperbolical manner that the pools of the Euphrates were dried up as completely as a piece of wood would be consumed by fire, not meaning that the waters could be burnt, but more forcibly setting forth by the metaphor the wonderful nature of what took place."

33. it is *time to thresh her*] Translate, *The daughter of Babylon is as a threshing-floor* **at the time when it is trampled,** *i.e.* trodden hard in readiness for the threshing: *yet a little while and the harvest-time* **shall come to her,** *i.e.* overtake her. The A.V. makes the threshing come before the harvest, and represents the harvest as belonging to Babylon, whereas she is herself the harvest to be threshed out by others. In the East the corn is not stored up in the straw in ricks as with us, but when reaped is carried at once to the threshing-floor, a level spot carefully prepared beforehand, usually about fifty feet in diameter, and trampled hard. The grain after it has been beaten out by a sledge drawn over it by oxen is separated from the chaff and stored up in granaries. For the preparation of these threshing-floors see Virg. 'Geor.' i. 178 sqq.; Robinson, 'Pal.' ii. 227; and for the manner of threshing, Isai. xxi. 10, xxviii. 27, 28.

34, 35. These two verses lit. are, *Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath devoured* **us,** *hath crushed* **us, he hath set us aside** *as an empty vessel, he hath swallowed* **us** *like a crocodile, he hath filled his maw with my delicacies, he hath cast* **us** *out. My wrong and my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitress of*

36 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

37 And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant.

38 They shall roar together like lions: they shall ‖ yell as lions' whelps.

‖ Or, *shake themselves.*

39 In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD.

40 I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats.

41 How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

42 The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

43 Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land

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Zion say: and my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldæa, shall Jerusalem say. The word *tannin*, rendered *dragon* in the A.V., comes from a root signifying *length*, and is thus the proper name for either the great saurians or for serpents. *Dragon*, derived from the Greek verb *to see*, applies only to the latter, but probably both here and generally the crocodile is more frequently meant than the serpent. See note on ch. xiv. 6, Lam. iv. 3. For *my delicacies* or *dainty meats* see Gen. xlix. 20. Because the sing. pronoun is used here, the Masorites have made the pronoun sing. throughout. In *v.* 35 the meaning of *my flesh* is made plain by the preceding verse. Nebuchadnezzar had devoured Jerusalem, had treated her as ruthlessly as a crocodile does its prey, and for this cruelty he and Babylon justly are to be punished. According to the Hebrew idiom, the two nouns go together, and mean, *the wrong done to my flesh.*

36. *her sea*] Probably the great lake dug by Nitocris to receive the waters of the Euphrates, see note on ch. ix. 1. There is no authority for calling the Euphrates a sea, the word in the place usually quoted in proof, Isai. xxi. 1, referring rather to the level expanse of Babylonia, see note there. The Nile is often called a sea, see note on Isai. xix. 5, but the word properly means any large body of water, and the distinction between lakes and seas is almost peculiar to our language. But even we call lakes *meres*, *i.e.* maria, seas.

her springs] *Her* **reservoir** (in the sing.) lit. *her digging*, and so not any one lake like that in the preceding clause, but the whole system of canals dug not merely for purposes of defence, but for irrigation. In the Phillips cylinder Nebuchadnezzar says, "All around I made the water run in an immense canal, and across those mighty waters like unto the abysses of the sea I constructed an aqueduct," Oppert, p. 231. The use of the term *sea* in this inscription shews that we need not go out of our way to find a metaphorical exposition. The wealth of Babylonia depended upon irrigation, see ch. li. 13, and vast portions of it are now desert, because the canals are dry.

37. *heaps*] Not *tels*, mounts on which to erect cities, see note on ch. xxx. 18, but heaps of rubbish, formed in this case by the decay of the unburnt bricks of which Babylon was built. It is these heaps which have yielded such large wealth of historical documents in our own days. Rawlinson says of them, "Vast 'heaps' or mounds, shapeless and unsightly, are scattered at intervals over the entire region where it is certain that Babylon anciently stood; and between the 'heaps' the soil is in many places composed of fragments of pottery and bricks, and deeply impregnated with nitre, infallible indications of its having once been covered with buildings," 'Anc. Mon.' II. 521.

dragons] **Jackals**, ch. x. 22. It is not the word used in *v.* 34.

38. *they shall yell*] Or, *growl*, the Hebr. word being an imitation of the actual sound.

39. *In their heat...*] The metaphor of the preceding verse is maintained. While like so many young lions they are in the full glow of excitement over their prey, God prepares for them a drinking-bout, the word referring not to a feast, but to a carousal. But their mad revelry is to end in the sleep of death, cp. *v.* 57; Dan. v. 1; Herod. I. 191.

40. *lambs...rams...he goats*] *i.e.* all classes of the population, see note on Isai. xxxiv. 6.

41. *Sheshach*] See notes on *v.* 1, ch. xxv. 26.

surprised] *i.e. seized, captured;* it is the word rendered *stopped* in *v.* 32.

42. *The sea...*] By a grand metaphor the invading army is compared to the sea, and Babylon *is covered with the confused noise* and splashing *of its waves*, see Note on ch. iii. 23.

43. *a wilderness*] Or, **a desert** of sand, an *arâbâh*, on which see note on ch. ii. 6.

wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth *any* son of man pass thereby.

44 And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

45 My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD.

46 And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come *one* year, and after that in *another* year *shall come* a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler.

47 Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will †do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.

† Heb. *visit upon.*

48 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that *is* therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD.

49 ‖As Babylon *hath caused* the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all ‖the earth.

‖ Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and with Babylon, &c.*

‖ Or, *the country.*

50 Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

51 We are confounded, because

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a land wherein] The pronoun is fem. pl., and refers to the cities. Lit. it means *a land—no man shall dwell in them, i.e.* its cities, *and no human being shall pass through them.*

44. *I will bring forth...*] This means not only that the sacred vessels plundered from Jerusalem, and laid up in the very temple of Bel, shall be restored, but as Bel is the tutelary deity of Babylon, that all the men and women dragged from other lands to people the city, and the wealth gained by its wars, shall be torn away from it. By its wall falling is shewn the insignificance to which it shall be reduced; for as long as there was anything inside worth plundering, its fortifications would still be maintained.

45. *the fierce anger of the LORD*] *i.e.* against Babylon. The people of God are to flee away that they may not be involved in the long series of miseries which will end in making Babylon utterly desolate. For proof that the Israelites needed this advice, and that many neglected it, see note on ch. l. 8.

46. *And lest your heart...*] This must either be translated *let not*, or the verb *beware* must be supplied. The latter is the more regular construction. Lit. it is *And* beware *lest your heart faint, and ye be afraid because of the rumour that is heard in the land: for in one year shall one rumour come, and afterwards in another year another rumour; and violence shall be in the land, ruler against ruler.* The fall of Babylon was to be preceded by a state of unquiet, men's minds being unsettled partly by rumours of the warlike preparations of the Medes, and of actual invasions, in repelling one of which Neriglissar fell in battle: partly by intestine feuds, in which Evil-Merodach and Laborosoarchod were murdered. So before the conquest of Jerusalem by the Romans the Church had similar warnings, Matt. xxiv. 6, 7.

47. *Therefore*] These intestine feuds were signs of Babylon's decay, and proved that she was ripe for judgment, just as similar feuds and murders and usurpations had preceded the punishment of Samaria. The word *therefore* implies that the exiles were to note them as signs of the near approach of God's visitation.

shall be confounded] Or, **ashamed.**

49. Many translations have been offered for this verse, which because of its brevity is obscure. It probably should be rendered *As Babylon caused the slain of Israel to fall, so because of Babylon have fallen the slain of the whole earth.* The particles lit. are *also—also*, and signify that Babylon has not only to answer for the slaughter of the Israelites, but also for the general carnage caused by its wars.

50. *remember the LORD afar off*] Or, **from afar,** from Chaldæa, far away from Jehovah's dwelling in Jerusalem. See note on ch. xxxi. 3. The verse is a renewed entreaty to the Jews to leave Babylon and journey homewards, as soon as the conqueror Cyrus grants them permission to return.

51. *We are confounded*] Or, **ashamed.** The exiles in this verse do not mean "We are unwilling to return: for Jerusalem has brought upon us nothing but humiliation." It is rather a statement of the wrong done to them by Babylon, and so leads naturally to Babylon's punishment in *v.* 52. "We lead here a life of shame. Daily the reproach is cast in our

we have heard reproach: shame hath covered our faces: for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the LORD's house.

52 Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan.

53 Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD.

54 A sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans:

55 Because the LORD hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice; when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered:

56 Because the spoiler is come upon her, *even* upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: for the LORD God of recompences shall surely requite.

57 And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts.

58 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ‖Or, The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ‖broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the ‖Or, *The walls of broad Babylon.* ‖Or, *made naked.*

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teeth that Bel has proved more mighty than Jehovah, and, as the possession of the sacred vessels seems to prove this, we are unable to answer the vaunt, and shame therefore covers our faces: for it is true that strangers have gone into the sanctuaries of the house of Jehovah, which only our high-priests were permitted to enter."

52. In this verse God comforts His people. The Babylonians shall soon see their idols vanquished, and as they lie groaning upon the lost battle-field shall be forced to acknowledge that Bel is powerless to help them.

53. *the height of her strength*] There is in this an allusion to the vast height of the walls of Babylon, though what their actual measurement was is very uncertain. Herodotus gives it as 335 English feet, Pliny 235, Q. Curtius 150, and Strabo 75; see Rawlinson, 'Anc. Mon.' II. 518. As there was an outer and an inner enclosure, they may not all have been speaking of the same walls.

54. *A sound of a cry*] *i.e.* the war-cry; cp. ch. l. 22.

55. *hath spoiled*] Lit. *is spoiling.* It explains why the war-cry is now heard. The whole verse should be rendered, *For Jehovah wasteth Babylon, and will make to cease from her the loud noise* [of busy life]*: and their waves* [the surging masses of the enemy] *roar like many waters: the noise of their shouting is given forth, i.e.* resounds. On the meaning of the word rendered *noise*, see note on ch. xxv. 31.

56. *every one*] These words do not exist in the Hebr., but have been inserted because the verb is sing.; but as it precedes the noun, this change of numbers is a thing of common occurrence, and the words should be rendered *Their bows* **are** *broken; for Jehovah is a God of recompences; He will certainly requite.* The translation *are broken*, which has been much attacked, is justified by the parallel place, 1 S. ii. 4.

57. *her wise* men] For an enumeration of them, see Dan. ii. 2.

her captains, and her rulers] See notes on *v.* 23, and cp. with the verse generally, *v.* 39.

58. *The broad walls*] Herodotus makes the breadth of the walls 85 English feet, Strabo and Q. Curtius, 32, 'Anc. Mon.' II. 518.

shall be utterly broken] *Shall be utterly* **made naked** (marg.), *i.e.* the ground beneath them shall be laid bare by their demolition.

her high gates] Oppert ('Expéd. en Mésop.' I. 230) quotes an inscription in which Nebuchadnezzar says "In the thresholds of the great gates I inserted folding-doors of brass, with very strong railings and gratings (?)." It appears also from an inscription which he quotes, p. 227, from a cylinder now at Aberdeen, that Esar-haddon was the real builder of the walls of Babylon, and that Nebuchadnezzar only completed them. See Nägelsb. in loc.

the people...] Jeremiah concludes his prophecy with a quotation from Hab. ii. 13, transposing however the words *fire* and *vanity* (though six MSS. make the two prophets verbally agree). In Habakkuk the words refer generally to the final failure of the great labours of the Chaldæans, but Jeremiah applies them with great power to the stupendous works intended to make Babylon an eternal city, but which were to end in such early and utter disappointment. In the Epilogue, *v.* 64,

people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

59 ¶ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went ‖with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah *was* a ‖quiet prince.

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* all these words that are written against Babylon.

61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words;

62 Then shalt thou say, O LORD, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be †desolate for ever.

63 And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, *that* thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:

64 And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

‖ Or, *on the behalf of.*

‖ Or, *prince of Menucha, or, chief chamberlain.*

† Heb. *desolations.*

it is noteworthy that Jeremiah returns to the quotation again.

59—64. Historical appendix. In his fourth year Zedekiah journeyed to Babylon, either to obtain some favour from Nebuchadnezzar, or more probably because he was summoned to be present on some state occasion. So Esar-haddon assembled twenty-two kings of Syria, and among them Manasseh king of Judah, to be present at the commencement of his great palace in Nineveh, 'Records of Past,' III. 107, 120. It is even possible that Nebuchadnezzar may have suspected the fidelity of Zedekiah, and have demanded an explanation of the presence of ambassadors that year at Jerusalem from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites and Phœnicia, ch. xxvii. 3. Jeremiah took the opportunity of sending to the exiles at Babylon this prophecy, having previously shewn his respect and affection for them in chs. xxiv. 5—7, xxix. 1—32.

59. *Seraiah*] He was brother to Baruch, cp. ch. xxxii. 12.

with Zedekiah] The rendering suggested in the marg. *on behalf of Zedekiah* is untenable.

a quiet prince] Lit. *prince of the resting-place, i.e. quartermaster.* It was his business to ride forward each day, and select the place where the king would halt and pass the night. As Zedekiah probably took the direct route across the desert, much would depend upon the skill and local knowledge of the person chosen for this office. The versions do not seem to have had our present reading. Thus the LXX. and Targ. render *prince of the present, i.e.* they read *minchah* for *menuchah:* while the Syr. had *Mahanah*, and render *camp-master.* The Vulg. renders *prince of prophecy*, which is at present inexplicable. The word *menuchah* occurs in Isai. xxxii. 18 in the pl. for *resting-places.*

60. *in a book*] Lit. *in* one *book*, on one roll of parchment, doubtless for the purpose mentioned in *v.* 63.

61. *and shalt see, and shalt read*] *i.e.*, according to the Hebrew idiom, *when thou comest to Babylon,* then see that thou *read....*

62—64. The sinking of the roll was not for the purpose of destroying it, but was a symbolical act, imitated in Rev. xviii. 21 of the apocalyptic Babylon; and the binding of a stone to it signified the certainty of the hasty ruin of the city. As it sank Seraiah was slowly to intone the last words of the prophecy, *and they shall be weary*, see *v.* 58, that so the verdict declaring the vanity of the mighty labours of Nebuchadnezzar in fortifying Babylon might be heard simultaneously with the splash, which symbolized her sinking into oblivion.

64. *Thus far* are *the words of Jeremiah*] Whoever it was that added ch. lii., he evidently felt that it was his duty to point out that it was not written by Jeremiah. It is an instance of the scrupulous care taken by the Jews of the sacred writings committed to their keeping.

NOTE on CHAP. LI. 2.

The word זָרִים as punctuated by the Masorites means *strangers*, but all the versions agree in giving it the same sense as the verb which follows זָרוֹתָיו *they shall winnow her.* The LXX. however render *insulters shall insult her;* but the Syr. and Targ. *plunderers shall plunder her, i.e.* they took the word in a metaphorical sense, while the Vulg. translates literally *winnowers shall winnow her.* As the authority of the versions combined is far greater than that of the Masorites, we must reject their vowels, and read זֹרִים for זָרִים.

CHAPTER LII.

1 *Zedekiah rebelleth.* 4 *Jerusalem is besieged and taken.* 8 *Zedekiah's sons killed, and his own eyes put out.* 12 *Nebuzar-adan burneth and spoileth the city.* 24 *He carrieth away the captives.* 31 *Evil-merodach advanceth Jehoiachin.*

[a] 2 Kin. 24. 18. [†] Heb. *reigned.*

[a] ZEDEKIAH *was* one and twenty years old when he [†] began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

4 ¶ And it came to pass in the [b] ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about. [b] 2 Kin. 25. 1. chap. 39. 1.

5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

7 Then the city was broken up,

THE HISTORICAL APPENDIX TO THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH.

CHAP. LII. This chapter forms a historical appendix to the Book of Jeremiah, giving additional details to those contained in ch. xxxix. of the capture of Babylon, which is the central point of his predictions. The last words of the foregoing chapter affirm that Jeremiah was not the author, and this assertion is supported by the style and by the date of the facts recorded about Jehoiachin, whose name, moreover, is spelt differently from the form employed in every one of the seven places in which Jeremiah has mentioned him (chs. xxii. 24, 28, xxiv. 1, xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2, xxxvii. 1). Kimchi, Abravanel, and others, nevertheless, assert that Jeremiah was the author, while Seb. Schmidt considers that the men of the great synagogue took the chapter from the Book of Kings, and added it here. Among modern commentators, Hävernick supposes that Jeremiah wrote the histories of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, just as Isaiah wrote that of Hezekiah, and that he also compiled the Books of Kings from the records kept by the prophets, and that consequently the chapter is virtually his work, and though no part of the book of his prophecy was affixed to it by himself. He does not, however, ascribe to Jeremiah the account of Jehoiachin's deliverance from prison, *vv.* 31—34, but supposes that this was added at a later time. For a full discussion of this point see Introd. to Books of Kings, Vol. II. p. 470. From the more antique spelling, especially of the name of Nebuchadrezzar, and from the various notices not found in the Book of Kings, Keil denies the identity of the two narratives, but considers them both taken from some fuller account of the history of the later Jewish kings than has come down to us. The more probable view, however, and that adopted by most commentators, is that given by Nägelsbach, who says that this chapter is taken from the 2nd Book of Kings, but that the person who added it here had access to other valuable documents, and made several modifications in it, the principal being the substitution of the account of those led captive by Nebuchadnezzar, in *vv.* 28—30, for the narrative given in 2 K. xxv. 22—26.

For the general commentary see 2 K. xxv. A comparison, however, of the readings in the two chapters is of considerable value, as it gives us an opportunity of gauging the correctness of the Hebrew text, which, owing to the modern date of Hebrew MSS., can only be done elsewhere by laborious and often unsatisfactory deductions drawn from the readings represented by the Ancient Versions.

1=2 K. xxiv. 18. *Hamutal*] The C'tib in both places has Hamital, Vulg. Amital, LXX. Ἀμιτάλ in 2 K., Ἀμειτάαλ here, but Syr. in both places Hamtul. The C'tib is thus plainly to be preferred to the Kri.

4=2 K. xxv. 1. *in the ninth year*] In 2 K. *year* is in the construct state, here in the absolute. Grammarians say this is the more correct, but Jeremiah himself uses the constr. state in chs. li. 59 and xxxix. 1, where the Kri ventures to correct his grammar.

Nebuchadrezzar] A more ancient and correct form than Nebuchadnezzar in 2 K.

pitched] *He pitched* in 2 K., *they pitched* here, agreeing better with *they built* which follows. The Vulg. is plu: in both texts, the LXX. and Syr. make both verbs sing. in 2 K., but plu. here.

6. *And in the fourth month*] Omitted in 2 K., though necessary for the sense. Cp. ch. xxxix. 2.

and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.

8 ¶ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him.

10 And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

11 Then he †put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in ‖chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in †prison till the day of his death.

12 ¶ Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, ‖† captain of the guard, *which* †served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

13 And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire:

† Heb. *blinded.*
‖ Or, *fetters.*
† Heb. *house of the wards.*
‖ Or, *chief marshal.*
† Heb. *chief of the executioners,* or, *slaughtermen.* And so ver. 14, &c.
† Heb. *stood before.*

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7. *and went forth out of the city*] Omitted in 2 K. xxv. 4, but probably from mere carelessness. The words are found in ch. xxxix. 4.

they went] In 2 K. *he went*, a manifest error.

8. *Zedekiah*] In 2 K. xxv. 5 *him*, a correction apparently for the sake of smoothness.

9. *in the land of Hamath*] Omitted in 2 K. xxv. 6, but found in ch. xxxix. 5. The LXX. omit in both places; the Vulg. and Syr. agree with the Hebrew.

he gave judgment upon him] Lit. here, *he spake as to him judgments*, but in 2 K., *they spake as to him judgment*. But Jeremiah regularly uses the plu. *judgments*, see chs. iv. 12, xii. 1, and the verb in the sing. is required by the sense, and the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. so read in both places.

10. *the king of Babylon slew*] In 2 K. xxv. 7 *they slew*. The LXX., Syr., and Vulg. have the verb in the sing. in both places.

he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah] Omitted in 2 K., but found in ch. xxxix. 6.

11. *the king of Babylon*] Omitted in 2 K. xxv. 7, where also for *he carried*, the Masorites read *they carried*. But as the consonants are the same in both places, and as the preceding verb in both texts is *he blinded*, the Masoretic vowels must be wrong.

and put him in prison till the day of his death] This clause naturally is not found in 2 K., for in the contemporaneous history nothing more could be known of Zedekiah than what befel him at Riblah. It was no doubt added by the same hand which inserted the account of the deportations to Babylon. The word for *prison* is lit. *house of visitations*, *i.e.* of punishments, and it thus appears that Zedekiah had to endure a sharper form of imprisonment than Jehoiachin, but the idea of the LXX. (who render *mill-house*), that Zedekiah suffered the same fate as Samson, is an untrustworthy tradition, inferred, as Ewald thinks, from Lam. v. 13.

12. *the tenth* day *of the month*] In 2 K. xxv. 8 *the seventh*, and so all the versions except the Syr., which in 2 K. has *the ninth*. This discrepancy is owing to letters having been used for numerals in old time (Henderson).

which *served*] Or, **stood before**. In 2 K. xxv. *a servant of the king of Babylon*, a less correct phrase, as they might all be described as Nebuchadnezzar's servants, *i.e.* slaves, but *to stand before* a king implied high office, see note on ch. xxxv. 19. The LXX. has the right phrase in both places, and by the use of the participle also corrects the punctuation of the Masorites, according to which the clause must be translated, with the Syr. and Vulg., *came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard: he stood before the king in Jerusalem.* But Nebuchadnezzar did not come nearer Jerusalem than Riblah, nor can we evade this difficulty by saying that Nebuzaradan's tenure of office was limited to the time when he was at Jerusalem, for the contrary was the case. We must punctuate therefore with the LXX. עָמַד for עָמֹד, and translate,...*came Nebuzaradan, captain of the body-guard, an officer of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem.*

13. *all the houses of the great* men] Lit. *every house the great*, but in 2 K. xxv. 9,

14 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

15 Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.

16 But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vinedressers and for husbandmen.

[c] chap. 27. 19. 17 Also the [c]pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

18 The caldrons also, and the [‖]shovels, and the snuffers, and the [‖]bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

‖ Or, *instruments to remove the ashes.* ‖ Or, *basons.*

19 And the basons, and the [‖]firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; *that* which *was* of gold *in* gold, and *that* which *was* of silver *in* silver, took the captain of the guard away.

‖ Or, *censers.*

20 The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls that *were* under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the LORD: [†]the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

† Heb. *their brass.*

[d] 1 Kin. 7. 15. 2 Kin. 25. 17. 2 Chron. 3. 15. † Heb. *thread.*

21 And *concerning* the [d]pillars, the height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits; and a [†]fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof *was* four fingers: *it was* hollow.

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every great house. The A.V. in both places is wrong, the meaning being that only the larger houses were burnt, and as the article here is intensive, it should be rendered all *the largest houses.* The LXX. and Vulg. translate rightly. Cp. note on 2 K. xxv. 9 and 2 Chro. xxxvi. 19.

14. The Book of Kings omits the unnecessary *all* before *walls*, but also the necessary *with* before *captain* (Graf).

15. certain *of the poor of the people, and*] Rightly omitted in 2 K. xxv. 11, being inserted through some confusion with *v.* 16. The LXX. carelessly omit the whole verse.

multitude] Possibly *workmen.* See Note at end of Chapter. The object of Nebuchadnezzar was to people Babylon, not with paupers, but with men of a better class, artizans and workmen, who would enrich it. The expense of taking them to Babylon must have been considerable.

16. *Nebuzar-adan*] Omitted in most MSS. in 2 K. xxv. 12.

for husbandmen] In 2 K. the word is misspelt. The LXX., not detecting the error, could not translate it, and retain εἰς γαβίν. Note that these husbandmen are not *ploughmen*, אכרים, who cultivated land on a large scale, but *delvers*, יגבים, who tilled little plots of ground with the mattock.

17. In 2 K. xxv. 13 the prep. is omitted before *house* in the first clause, and *all* before *brass* in the last.

18. *bowls*] Properly, *vessels for sprinkling.* It is rightly omitted in 2 K., as it occurs again in *v.* 19.

19. *basons...caldrons...candlesticks...spoons ...cups*] All these are omitted in 2 K. purposely to shorten the narrative.

20. *one sea*] In 2 K. xxv. 16 **the** *one sea*, rightly, and so here in the C'tib. The Kri erroneously directs the omission of the indispensable article, and the A.V. obeys even in 2 K., where no such direction is given.

twelve brasen bulls that were *under*] Omitted in 2 K. and in ch. xxvii. 19. Probably rightly, for what is said here of their being under the bases is a mistake. The bases were under the ten lavers. The LXX. make sense by translating, *the twelve brasen bulls under the sea.* Graf draws the inference from 2 K. xvi. 17, that Ahaz gave these bulls to Tiglath-Pileser, but this is uncertain, though possible.

king] Omitted in 2 K., as also the pleonastic pronoun after *brass.*

21—23. As these verses are purposely abbreviated in 2 K. xxv. 17, it is unnecessary to specify the omissions. For the matter see 1 K. vii. 15 sqq.

21. *the thickness thereof* was *four fingers*] The *fillet* mentioned just above means a **measuring line**, and from the dimensions given it appears that the pillars were twelve cubits, *i.e.* eighteen feet, in circumference, and thus the diameter would be 5 feet 9 inches. As the brass was four fingers, *i.e.* scarcely four inches thick, the hollow centre would be more than five feet in diameter.

22 And a chapiter of brass *was* upon it; and the height of one chapiter *was* five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapiters round about, all *of* brass. The second pillar also and the pomegranates *were* like unto these.

23 And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; *and* all the pomegranates upon the network *were* an hundred round about.

24 ¶ And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the †door:

† Heb. *threshold.*

25 He took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that †were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the ‖principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city.

† Heb. *saw the face of the king.*

‖ Or, *scribe of the captain of the host.*

26 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

27 And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land.

28 This *is* the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty:

29 In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two †persons:

† Heb. *souls.*

30 In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away cap-

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22. *the height of one chapiter* was *five cubits*] In 2 K. *three cubits*, but five is the height given in 1 K. vii. 16.

23. *ninety and six...on a side;* and *all* ...were *an hundred*] The Hebrew for *on a side* is *windwards*, and it cannot mean that there were ninety-six pomegranates on each side, for then, as the capitals were square, the whole number would have been 384. It must mean that these ninety-six were **towards the** four **winds**, twenty-four towards the north, twenty-four towards the east, and so on. Add one at each corner, which would be each towards two winds, north-east, north-west, south-east, and south-west, and the whole 100 is made up.

24. *the second priest*] The article is wrongly omitted in 2 K. xxv. 18.

25. *an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war*] Or, **who had charge of men of war.** The A.V. makes him commander-in-chief, while the Hebrew simply says he was a Pakid, or second in command, *i.e.* a lieutenant, see ch. i. 10, possibly one among many others of equal rank. The reading here היה for הוא in 2 K. xxv. 19, though defended by Hitzig, is a mere error.

seven men] See note on 2 K. xxv. 19.

the principal scribe] So rightly in 2 K., where see note. The article here is wrongly omitted.

27—30. In place of the short account of the events which followed the destruction of Jerusalem given in 2 K. xxv. 22—26, and probably abbreviated from the detailed narrative in Jer. xl. 7—xliii. 7, we have in these four verses an enumeration of certain captives carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. In reading it, the first thing that attracts attention is the date of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The earliest deportation is said to have taken place in his seventh year, but that of Jehoiachin was really in his eighth (2 K. xxiv. 12), and was much more numerous than that described here. The suggestion therefore of Ewald, 'Gesch. Isr.' III. i. 435, is now generally received, that the word *ten* has dropped out before *seven*, and that the deportations mentioned here are all connected with the final war against Zedekiah. Even then the calculation of Nebuchadnezzar's reign is entirely different from that used elsewhere, shewing that the writer had access to a document not known to the compiler of the Book of Kings. In each date there is a difference of one year. (Compare with this the dates in Dan. i. 1; Jer. xxv. 1, where see note.)

According to this account, Nebuchadnezzar, in his 17th (usually called his 18th) year, while the siege of Jerusalem was going on, selected 3,023 Jews for deportation to Babylon. In the next year, his 18th (*i.e.* 19th), upon the capture of Jerusalem, he selected 832 more, the smallness of the number evincing the desperate tenacity with which the Jews had defended themselves during the year and a half of the siege, and the havoc made in them by famine, pestilence, and the sword. We must bear in mind, however, that Nebuchadnezzar had not left more than six or seven

tive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons *were* four thousand and six hundred.

31 ¶ And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the *first* year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison,

32 And spake †kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon, † Heb. *good things with him.*

33 And changed his prison garments: and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life.

34 And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, †every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life. † Heb. *the matter of the day in his day.*

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thousand people in Jerusalem under Zedekiah, and must not exaggerate this fewness. Finally, five years afterwards, Nebuzaradan selected 745 more, not *from Jerusalem*, as is said expressly of the 832, but Jews simply, the occasion probably being the war with the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites.

Another point often noticed is the small number generally of the exiles carried away, compared with the 42,360 men who returned with Ezra (Ezr. ii. 64, 65), leaving a large Jewish population behind at Babylon. But if these were mere supplementary deportations, they shew that a continual drain of people from Judæa was going on, and thus help to solve the difficulty. The 10,000 carried away with Jehoiachin formed, nevertheless, the nucleus and centre, and gave tone to the whole. For them see note on 2 K. xxiv. 14. And when they began to thrive in Babylon, large numbers would emigrate thither of their own accord.

31. *in the five and twentieth* day *of the month*] In 2 K. xxv. 27, *the seven and twentieth*, and in the LXX., *the four and twentieth.*

in the first *year of his reign*] The Hebrew here is *in the year of his kingship*, but in 2 K., *in the year of his* being *king.*

and brought him forth] Omitted in 2 K. There is also a difference in the way of spelling *prison*, the form used here being found also in ch. xxxvii. 4.

32. *above the throne of the kings*] There is a pleonastic use of prepositions here, while the article before *kings* is omitted, though found in 2 K. xxv. 28. The Kri inserts it.

34. *of Babylon*] Omitted in 2 K. xxv. 30, as also are the words, *until the day of his death.* Many MSS. omit them here, but probably, as Thenius remarks, it was the original reading, and was changed into *all the days of his life*, that the book might not end with the unlucky word *death.* As it is, the two last verses, *vv.* 33, 34, end with the same words, which the original writer would probably have avoided, and here both the original reading and the more euphemistic form substituted for it, have been retained, because both probably were found in various copies of the book, and the Masorites were too scrupulous to omit anything that was possibly part of Holy Scripture.

The result of this comparison of two parallel portions of Scripture is to shew that though not free from clerical errors and mistakes of copyists the body of the text is remarkably sound. Many of the differences between the two texts are abbreviations made purposely by the compiler of the Book of Kings; others are the result of negligence; and upon the whole the text of the Book of Kings is inferior to that of the Appendix to the Book of Jeremiah. Bearing in mind, however, that possibly they are not two transcripts of the same text, but the result of an independent use by two different writers of the same original authority, their complete agreement, except in trivial matters and mistakes easy of correction, is a satisfactory proof of the general trustworthiness of the Masoretic text in all more important particulars.

NOTE on CHAP. LII. 15.

The word for *multitude* here is אָמוֹן, but in 2 K. xxv. 11 הָמוֹן, and both are usually regarded as equivalent to עָם, *people*, in ch. xxxix. 9. See Note on ch. iii. 23. Hitzig however, followed by Graf, and Nägelsb. render *workman, artificer*, appealing to Prov. viii. 30, where see note, and Song of Sol. vii. 1, where the word is אָמָּן. In Syr. a similar word ܐܘܡܢܐ means *artificer*. As however none of the versions have this rendering its adoption would require us to believe that the word had so gone out of use as not to be understood.

LAMENTATIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

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Name.

THE prophecy of Jeremiah is immediately followed in the English Version by five lyric poems, called in the Hebrew *Aichah*, i.e. *How*, the word with which the first hymn commences, and which is repeated in chs. ii. 1, iv. 1. As this custom of calling books by the initial word is almost entirely confined to the Jews, the title in the versions is taken from the general nature of the contents, and thus the LXX. called these poems Θρῆνοι, *Threni, i.e.* Dirges, and the Syr. and Vulg. *Lamentations*. Nor is the name unknown to the Rabbins, by whom the book is called קִינוֹת *Kinoth*, after the title given by David to the elegy composed by him upon the death of Saul (2 S. i. 17, where the word is fully explained in the note). Jeremiah himself uses the term in chs. vii. 29, ix. 10, 20; and in 2 Chro. xxxv. 25 it is applied to the dirge composed by the prophet in memory of king Josiah, which some commentators identify with ch. iv. of our present book, while more generally it is supposed to have been lost. To this Hebrew name St Jerome refers in his 'Prologus Galeatus,' saying, *Incipiunt Threni*, i.e. *Lamentationes, quæ Cynoth Hebraice inscribuntur*. In the Hebrew Bible the Lamentations are arranged among the Cethubim, or Holy Writings, because of the nature of their contents. For the Jews admit into the canon of prophecy only (1) the early histories, as having been written by the seers; and (2) those writings which are strictly prophetical. Necessarily, therefore, the Lamentations as being lyrical poetry are classed not with Prophecies, but with the Psalms and Proverbs. But this classification is probably later than the translation of the LXX., who have appended the Lamentations to Jeremiah's prophecy, inserting however between them the apocryphal book of Baruch, and in fact counting the three as only one book.

Author.

Although no name is attached to these poems in the Hebrew, yet both ancient tradition and internal evidence point to Jeremiah as the author. In the LXX., prefixed to the Lamentations, we find the following note: *And it came to pass after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said.* It is scarcely possible that the LXX. in a matter like this can have made a mistake: and the tradition, which they have embodied in this verse, was apparently received also by the Jews of Palestine: for Josephus says ('Antiq.' x. 5), that "Jeremiah composed a dirge for Josiah's funeral, *which remains unto this day*." These last words go far to prove that Josephus identified the Lamentations spoken of in 2 Chro. xxxv. 25, with our present book. So too the book is attributed to Jeremiah in the Targum of Jonathan, in the Talmud,

'Baba-Bathra' 15. 1, and in the Syriac version (at the beginning and end of ch. v.).

Without very strong evidence to the contrary, a tradition so old, general, and reasonable, is not lightly to be set aside; and though persons have been found to doubt its truth, yet even they ascribe these poems to Baruch, or some disciple of Jeremiah, which is very much the same as saying that though not written by Jeremiah they were written by his shadow. But the objections brought against his being the author are not of such a kind as to carry conviction with them, being, first, the existence of contradictions between the two books: secondly, the absence of Jeremiah's peculiarities: and lastly, the assertion that the writer borrowed from Ezekiel.

(1) But the only instance of a contradiction is that brought forward by Schrader in his revised edition of De Wette's 'Introduction.' In Lam. v. 7 we read "Our fathers have sinned, and we have borne their iniquities;" and this is supposed to be at variance with the prophet's teaching in ch. xxxi. 29, 30. Even if so, it is exactly in accordance with what he says in chap. xxxii. 18; but in our notes upon the former place we have shewn how entirely mistaken is the exegesis which supposes that either Jeremiah or Ezekiel modified in the slightest degree the teaching of the second commandment.

(2) As regards the absence of Jeremiah's peculiarities, the exact opposite is the case. It might almost be enough to mention the occurrence of "My terrors round about," Lam. ii. 22, the prophet's favourite motto; see note on ch. xx. 3. But Prof. Plumptre sums up the internal evidence drawn from these peculiarities with great force (in Smith's 'Bibl. Dict.') as follows: "The poems belong unmistakeably to the last days of the kingdom, or the commencement of the exile; and are written by one who speaks with the vividness and intensity of an eyewitness of the misery which he bewails." Then, after referring to the union of strong passionate feeling with entire submission to Jehovah, so characteristic both of the prophecy of Jeremiah and of the Lamentations, he points out some of the minuter evidences of identity. "In both we meet once and again with the picture of the 'Virgin-daughter of Zion' sitting down in her shame and misery (Lam. i. 15, ii. 13; Jer. xiv. 17). In both the prophet's eyes flow down with tears (Lam. i. 16, ii. 11, iii. 48, 49; Jer. ix. 1, xiii. 17, xiv. 17). In both there is the same haunting feeling of being surrounded with fears and terrors on every side (Lam. ii. 22; Jer. vi. 25, xlvi. 5). In both the worst of all the evils under which they are suffering is the iniquity of the prophets and the priests (Lam. ii. 14, iv. 13; Jer. v. 30, 31, xiv. 13, 14). The sufferer appeals for vengeance to the righteous Judge (Lam. iii. 64—66; Jer. xi. 20). Finally, he bids the rival nations that exulted in the fall of Jerusalem prepare for a like desolation (Lam. iv. 21; Jer. xlix. 12)."

(3) In proof of the third objection, that the author of the Lamentations has made use of the prophecies of Ezekiel, Nägelsbach brings forward two passages, namely, Lam. ii. 14, compared with Ezek. xii. 24, xiii. 6, &c.; and Lam. ii. 15, compared with Ezek. xxvii. 3, xxviii. 12.

Now first of all, were Nägelsbach's assertions correct his conclusion would not follow. For Ezekiel wrote the prophecies referred to some time before the siege of Jerusalem, and we have every reason to believe that a constant intercourse was maintained between the exiles and the people of Jerusalem, and that what Ezekiel said was soon known to his countrymen at home. It is an old and not unreasonable opinion that the two prophets themselves were in constant communication, and St Jerome affirms that they interchanged their prophecies. We need not therefore invent a new prophet to write the Lamentations because of points of agreement with Ezekiel, which from the earliest times have been accounted for in a more satisfactory and interesting way.

But let us examine the assertion itself. As regards then the first of the places brought forward in proof, we find in Lam. ii. 14, "Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee," vain things being lit. "false things." Now of the two words for falsehood commonly found in the prophets, it is quite true that Jeremiah generally uses that which

implies moral turpitude, *e.g.* חזון שקר, ch. xiv. 14; while in Lam. ii. 14, a word is used implying only that the prophecy failed of its accomplishment, חזון שוא, and it is this side of false prophecy upon which Ezekiel almost entirely dwells; but naturally in a Lamentation Jeremiah would not be thinking so much of the wickedness of the prophets as of the failure of the expectations they had aroused, and so would use the softer term. But the other word, rendered *foolish things*, instead of proving really disproves the idea that Ezekiel was in the writer's mind. For Ezekiel uses the word in the sense of mortar, Ezek. xiii. 10, whereas the writer of Lamentations employs it in the sense of *insipidity, i.e.* folly, for which his authority is found in Job vi. 6. We find also in the book of Jeremiah a slightly different form of the word used in the same sense in ch. xxiii. 13, where see note. It is true that in Lam. ii. 14 Nägelsb. translates "Thy prophets foretold to thee whitewash," but whitewash is not mortar, and to prophecy whitewash is a metaphor too extraordinary for acceptance.

In the second of these passages, Lam. ii. 15, Jerusalem is called "The perfection of beauty." In Ezek. xxvii. 3, xxviii. 12, the same words are applied to Tyre. But a similar phrase, with the difference only of a participle for an adj., occurs in Ps. l. 2, of Zion, and when we find that the next words in Lam. ii. 15, "the joy of the whole earth," are a quotation also from the description of Zion in Ps. xlviii. 2, the conclusion seems evident that in both places the writer was quoting from the Psalms.

As the objections then are so devoid of weight, and the internal evidence upon the whole so strongly favours the idea of Jeremiah being the author, we conclude that the assertion of the LXX. is to be received as highly probable.

Date.

The time of the composition of these poems is certainly the period immediately after the capture of Jerusalem. Ewald indeed thinks that they may not have been written till after the descent into Egypt, but Bleek ('Introd.' 503, sq.) more probably ascribes them to the month which intervened between the capture of Jerusalem and its destruction. We know that the prophet spent this month in Jerusalem in comparative security, ch. xxxix. 14, and the extreme vividness of his descriptions, and the poignancy of his grief, both shew that the troubles he depicted were still recent. But the most convincing proof offered by Bleek is the fact that constantly famine and hunger are described as still raging in the city; see ch. i. 11, 19, ii. 19, 20, iv. 4, &c. Probably there would be great difficulty in obtaining supplies of food for some time after the city had surrendered itself, and the painful pictures of mothers unable to suckle their children, and of those delicately nurtured dying of hunger on the dung-hills (ch. iv. 3, 5), seem plainly to point to the sufferings which still pressed heavily upon the community exhausted by a protracted siege, even after it had surrendered.

Subject.

The subject of these poems is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldæans. As we have seen above, Josephus imagined that what called forth the prophet's lamentations was the death of king Josiah; but this idea probably was not taken from the contents, but was based upon the assumption that the Lamentations spoken of in 2 Chro. xxxv. 25, must be identical with our present book. Such an opinion however can no longer be allowed to have much weight, now that attention has been called to the fact that many books are mentioned in Scripture, especially in the Chronicles, which, though written by prophets, had no place in the Canon, and have not been preserved. Looking at the contents we find that in the *first* of these poems the prophet dwells upon the miseries of hunger, of death in battle, of the profanation and plundering of the sanctuary, and of impending exile, oppressed by which the city sits solitary. In the *second*, we see these same sufferings, but described with more intense force, and in closer connection with the national sins which had caused them, and which had been aggravated by the faithlessness of the prophets. In the *third*, there is

something of the old feeling put forward so strongly in ch. xii., but the spirit of the writer is more subdued and humbled, and no longer so impatient and rebellious as of old. As Jeremiah reflects upon the bitter experiences of his past life, he feels how hard it is that God's people should have to drink of the cup of chastisement almost more deeply than the wicked. Its contents are more bitter to them because they see whose is the hand that holds it to their lips. But he acknowledges that it is a Father's hand, and feels that chastisement is for the believer's good, and so he dwells more upon the spiritual aspect of sorrow, and the certainty that finally there must be the redeeming of life for God's people, and vengeance for His enemies. In the *fourth*, we again see that Judah's sorrows have been caused by her sins. Finally, in ch. v., Jeremiah prays that Zion's reproach may be taken away, and that Jehovah will grant repentance unto his people, and renew their days as of old. Many have thought that this prayer, in which the artificial structure of the rest is abandoned, was added by the prophet to his Lamentations in Egypt at a somewhat later time.

Structure.

Of the first four poems the structure is highly artificial. They are arranged in twenty-two portions, according to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but in the first three poems each portion is again subdivided into three double-clauses, the third differing from the first and second in that each also of these divisions begins with the same letter. In ch. iv., we have again twenty-two verses beginning with the letters of the alphabet in order, but each verse is divided into only two portions. In ch. v., though there are again twenty-two verses, the alphabetical initials are discontinued. It is remarkable that while the order of the alphabet is strictly followed in ch. i., it is departed from in the three other poems, the verse beginning with ב being always placed before that beginning with ע. As the idea of Grotius, that the order of the alphabet in the Chaldee as regards these letters was unsettled, has been shewn to be groundless, it is difficult to give a reason for this transposition. It is quite true that in some of the alphabetical Psalms we find similar deviations from the strict order of the alphabet, *e.g.* in Pss. xxxiv., cxlv.; but what is so remarkable here is that the same deviation is thrice repeated. But see on this subject the introduction to Pss. xxv., xxxiv., and cxi.

It has sometimes been objected to this method of arrangement that it is incompatible with real feeling. With equal truth it might be said that rhyme is inconsistent with real feeling. It is probable that to most Orientals the arrangement of words so as to end in similar sounds would seem trivial: the same objection has been brought by us in the West against their method of arranging their thoughts in alphabetical order. Really both methods depend upon the same law of our natures. It is a distraction and relief to the mind in sorrow to have some slight external difficulty to contend with, and the feeling diffused before in vague generalities is thus concentrated, and assumes a definite form. What can seem at first sight more artificial than the lyrical poetry of the Greeks and Romans, in which throughout the whole ode the quantity of every syllable is fixed, and line answers to line with unvarying exactness? Yet how naturally do all the deeper emotions of the mind yield themselves to these restrictions. And so here. The sorrow of the prophet would have spread itself out in boundless generalities but for the limitations of form. According to Oriental habit these restrictions are at the beginning; with us chiefly at the end of each verse; with the Greeks and Romans all through. But it was the limitation which gave shape to the sorrow which otherwise was floating vaguely around him. Tersely and vividly thought after thought shaped itself round each letter of the alphabet in order, and in the effort the prophet found relief from his anguish. So with men now. The necessities of rhyme and rhythm are an aid—not a difficulty—in expressing their emotions at times when deeper feelings are stirred. The slight effort required enables the sufferer to concentrate his thoughts; it helps him in finding for them proper expression. And usually

the deeper the sorrow the more complex is the structure of the poetry in which it is embodied, because the effort is itself a relief.

Liturgical Use.

The Book of Lamentations has always been much used in liturgical services as giving the spiritual aspect of sorrow. It is recited in the Jewish synagogues on the ninth of Ab, the day on which the Temple was destroyed. In the Roman Catholic Church it is sung at vespers in holy week. In our own Church the first, second, and third chapters were appointed in the first book of Edward VI. to be read on the Wednesday and Thursday before Easter. This use having been discontinued in the second book of Edward VI., and in all subsequent revisions of the Prayer-book, was restored in 1871, when the whole of ch. iii., and portions of chs. i., ii., and iv. were ordered to be read on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in holy week. For this choice two chief reasons may be given; the first, that in the wasted city and homeless wanderings of the chosen people we see an image of the desolation and ruin of the soul cast away from God's presence into the outer darkness because of sin; the second and chief, because the mournful words of the prophet set Him before us who has borne the chastisement due to human sin, and of whom instinctively we think as we pronounce the words,

> Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?
> Behold and see
> If there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow
> Which is done unto me,
> Wherewith Jehovah hath afflicted me
> In the day of His fierce anger?

THE

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The miserable estate of Jerusalem by reason of her sin.* 12 *She complaineth of her grief,* 18 *and confesseth God's judgment to be righteous.*

HOW doth the city sit solitary, *that was* full of people! *how* is she become as a widow! she *that was* great among the nations, *and* princess among the provinces, *how* is she become tributary!

2 She [a]weepeth sore in the [b]night, and her tears *are* on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort *her:* all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

[a] Jer. 13. 17.
[b] Job 7. 3.

3 Judah is gone into captivity be-

CHAP. I. This poem divides itself into two equal parts, in the first of which, *vv.* 1—11, the misery which has befallen the Jews is described, while in the second, *vv.* 12—22, Jerusalem laments over her sufferings. Twice, however, in the first part, in *vv.* 9 and 11, she breaks forth into ejaculations of distress, so preparing the mind for the more full outpouring of her grief which follows.

1, 2. In these two verses we have the same symbol of sorrow set before us as in Isai. xlvii. 1. Judæa, which in David's time had swayed subject kingdoms, and prided herself upon the populousness of her capital, now sits solitary, deprived alike of children and husband, neglected by her lovers, and betrayed by her friends. As Neumann points out, it is that same sad image which appears again in the well-known medal of Titus, struck to celebrate his triumph over Jerusalem. A woman sits weeping beneath a palm-tree, and below is the legend *Judæa capta.*

As each verse of the poem is divided into three parts, it is necessary entirely to reject the Masoretic punctuation, which attempts here also to carry out their uniform system of cutting every verse of the Bible into halves. Omitting also the feeble repetition of the initial *how* in the A. V., the first verse should be translated:—

How sitteth solitary the city that was full of people:
She is become as a widow that was great among the nations:
A princess among provinces she is become a vassal.

On her widowhood, cp. Isai. liv. 5. The word rendered *tributary* is not used of a money-payment till Esther x. 1: its older use was of personal labour, Josh. xvi. 10, and this is the meaning here, that the Jews must now render bondservice.

2. *lovers...friends*] *i.e.* the states in alliance with Judæa, and generally all human helpers. In *v.* 1 she is *as a widow*, abandoned by God, Jer. iii. 14: here she is deserted by her earthly comforters.

3. *because of affliction...*] The A. V., with Ewald, &c., takes the preposition as a causal, and thus the exile does not mean the forcible removal of the people to Babylon, but their flight into Egypt and elsewhere voluntarily. The sense therefore is *Judah, i.e.* the people, not of Jerusalem only, but of the whole land, *is gone into exile to escape from the affliction and laborious servitude*, to which they are subject in their own land. Keil, on the contrary, understands it of the people being carried to Babylon against their will, and explains the prep. as meaning *out of.* Out of the misery and severe labour which they have had to endure at home since the days when Pharaoh-Necho first imposed upon them a foreign yoke, they have now been dragged to worse things at Babylon. The first sense agrees best with what follows. Though thus the Jews abandon their own country, yet they find no rest. Voluntary exiles naturally might look for rest, in fact it was the object sought by them in emigrating, but captives would expect to have to labour. And so too the last clause, *all her pursuers have overtaken her in the straits.* The metaphor is taken from hunting. The Jews flee like deer to escape from the invading Chaldæans, but are driven by them into places whence there is no escape. See note on Ps. cxvi. 3.

cause of affliction, and [†]because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits.

[†] Heb. *for the greatness of servitude.*

4 The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she *is* in bitterness.

5 Her adversaries [c]are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her [d]children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

[c] Deut. 28. 13, 43, 44.

[d] Jer. 52. 28.

6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts *that* find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer.

7 Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her [‖]pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, *and* did mock at her sabbaths.

[‖] Or, *desirable.*

8 Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she [†]is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

[†] Heb. *is become a removing* or, *wandering.*

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4. *The ways*] *i.e.* the roads leading up to Jerusalem *mourn* because they are no longer trodden by the pilgrims coming in crowds to the three great festivals. Cp. Jer. xli. 5. And similarly *her gates are desolate*, because there are no longer people going in and out through them. Cp. Jer. xiv. 2, xvii. 25.

Zion] Zion, as the holy city, the seat of the temple, is the symbol of the religious life of the people, just as Judah in the previous verse represents their national life.

virgins] With the priests the virgins are mentioned because they took a prominent part in all religious festivals; Jer. xxxi. 13; Exod. xv. 20; Ps. lxviii. 25.

5. *are the chief*] Lit. *have become the head*, a fulfilment of Deut. xxviii. 44, and reversal of the promise, ibid. *v.* 13.

prosper] Lit. **are at rest.** Judæa is so entirely crushed that her enemies need take no precautions against resistance on her part. See notes on Jer. xii. 1, where the same word is translated *they are happy*, and on Jer. xxii. 21.

children] The word means *young children*, who are driven *before the enemy*, lit. **the adversary**, not as a flock of lambs which follow the shepherd, but for sale as slaves. In ancient sculptures such mournful processions of women and tender children are often engraved.

6. *her princes are become like harts...*] Jeremiah evidently had before his mind the thought of the sad flight of Zedekiah and his men of war, and their capture within a few miles of Jerusalem, Jer. xxxix. 4, 5. Exhausted by the long sufferings of the siege, they can neither fight nor flee, but resemble deer in time of drought, which have not strength even to run away from the hunter.

7. *Jerusalem remembered*] This verse should be translated,

Jerusalem **remembers** *in the days of her affliction, and of her homelessness,*
All her pleasant things which have been from the days of old:
Now that her people fall by the hand of the **adversary,**
And she hath no helper;
Her adversaries **have seen** *her,*
They have mocked at her sabbath-keepings.

Naturally in a time of sorrow Jerusalem calls to mind her past happiness. The word rendered *homelessness* occurs only here, and in ch. iii. 19, and Isai. lviii. 7, where see note. It properly means *wanderings*, and so describes the state of the Jews, cast forth from their homes and about to be dragged into exile.

her sabbaths] The word occurs only here, and means **her sabbath-keepings.** Many translate, *her cessations* from all activity, and so her ruined condition. But its more literal meaning is *sabbatisms*, and the cessation from labour every seventh day by the Jews struck foreigners as something strange, and provoked their ridicule. Cp. Hor. 'Sat.' I. ix. 69; Juvenal. 'Sat.' VI. 134; Ovid. 'A. A.' I. 76; Pers. 'Sat.' v. 184.

8. *therefore she is removed*] Or, *therefore she* **is become an abomination.** This is the translation of the Syr., and is adopted by most modern commentators. The A. V., following the LXX. and Vulg., derive the word from an entirely different root. The meaning is that sin has made Jerusalem an object of horror, and therefore she is cast away. The Hebrew of *grievously sinned*, lit. is, *Jerusalem hath sinned a sin*, giving the idea of a persistent continuance in wickedness.

yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward] Maintaining his metaphor of a woman exposed to public contumely, the prophet describes Jerusalem as groaning over the infamy of her deeds thus brought to open shame, and turn-

9 Her filthiness *is* in her skirts; she remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified *himself*.

10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her ‖ pleasant things: for she hath seen *that* the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command *that* [e] they should not enter into thy congregation.

‖ Or, *desirable.*

[e] Deut 23. 3.

11 All her people sigh, they seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat ‖ to relieve the soul: see, O LORD, and consider; for I am become vile.

‖ Or, *to make the soul to come again.*

12 ¶ ‖ *Is it* nothing to you, all ye that † pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow *like* unto my sorrow, *which is done* unto me, *wherewith the* LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of his fierce anger.

‖ Or, It is *nothing.*

† Heb. *pass by the way?*

13 From above hath he sent fire

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ing her back upon the spectators as far as possible, in order to hide herself. So Isaiah describes Babylon as "getting herself into darkness," when similarly disgraced, Isai. xlvii. 5.

9. *Her filthiness* is *in her skirts*] For the *skirt* or *train* of a dress see note on Jer. xiii. 22. The word rendered *filthiness* refers to personal defilement, which is no longer concealed beneath the raiment, but made manifest in a very revolting way.

she came down wonderfully] Cp. Isai. xlvii. 1; Jer. xlviii. 18. Jerusalem once enthroned on high as a princess must come down from her greatness to sit on the ground as a slave.

10. *her pleasant things*] By these are chiefly meant the sacred vessels of the temple, called in 2 Chro. xxxvi. 10 *the pleasant vessels of the house of Jehovah*. But when thus the temple was plundered, nothing would be spared by the enemy.

sanctuary...congregation] Even a Jew might not enter the innermost sanctuary, which was for the priests only; but now the tramp of heathen soldiery has been heard within its sacred precincts. For the *congregation* see notes on Jer. xxvi. 9, xxxi. 8. In Deut. xxiii. 3 Ammonites and Moabites were excluded from admission into the Jewish community for ever, yet even this prohibition was no bar to the reception of Ruth into the Jewish Church. To all other nations admission was accorded, though the conditions of proselytism were repulsive, nor does the text often quoted in disproof, Ezek. xliv. 9, forbid more than the admission of foreigners, while still "uncircumcised in heart and flesh," into the courts of the Lord's house. They must enter the Church before they might enter the temple. We must not therefore force these words into a meaning not borne out by Jewish law. What the prophet laments over is that heathens had forced their way into the sanctuaries of the temple to plunder them while still heathens, and therefore unfit for admission even into the congregation. By renouncing heathenism they might have been in due time admitted into the outer court for worship. This however was not what the prophet had in his mind, but the painful fact that Gentile conquerors had forced their way into places most holy in the eye of the Jew, and had plundered Jehovah's dwelling, that they might adorn with its sacred vessels the shrines of their false gods.

11. *sigh...seek*] **Are sighing...are seeking.** They are present participles, describing the condition of the people. The siege is over, but it has not brought them relief. Probably it was no easy matter for the Chaldæan army to supply its own commissariat, and after a siege lasting a year and a half the whole country, far and near, would be exhausted.

to relieve the soul] Lit. *to make the soul to come again* (marg.), *i.e.* to bring back life to them, cp. 1 S. xxx. 12. The surrender of the city makes them hope that if they can tide over the next day or two, the present scarcity will pass away. They thus bring out their jewels and such precious articles as still remain, to obtain with them at least a meal. The thought of this extremity of misery forces from the prophet a similar ejaculation of distress to that in *v.* 9, both of which, however, are put into the mouth of Jerusalem.

12—16. Upon this ejaculation, which closed the description of the miseries of the people, follows the lamentation of the city, personified as a woman in deep grief over her cruel fate.

12. Is it *nothing to you*] This is probably the best rendering. Lit. the words are, *Not to you, all ye wayfarers*, and the A. V., following the Syr., takes it as a question. The Vulg. and Targ. and probably the LXX., by giving the word *not* a different vowel, change it into an interjection, which the Targ. paraphrases thus: *I adjure all you who pass by, turn aside and look at me and see*, &c. In this case the right reading of the LXX. must be, οὐ πρὸς ὑμᾶς. Sym. has ὦ ὑμεῖς. Others, as Nägelsb., doubt whether the particle *not* can be taken interrogatively, and translate, *Look not on yourselves, ye passers by, but on me*, &c.

into my bones, and it prevaileth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate *and* faint all the day.

14 The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, *and* come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the Lord hath delivered me into *their* hands, *from whom* I am not able to rise up.

15 The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty *men* in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: the Lord hath trodden ‖the virgin, the daughter of Judah, *as* in a winepress.

16 For these *things* I weep; [f]mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should †relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

‖ Or, *the winepress of the virgin, &c.*

[f] Jer. 13. 17. & 14. 17. chap. 2. 18.

† Heb. *bring back.*

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13. *From above*] Lit. **From on high**; it is no earthly, but heavenly fire which burns in the bones of Jerusalem.

and it prevaileth against them] Or, *and it* **hath subdued** *them.* Many other renderings have been offered for the verb, but the sense of ruling or conquering is quite tenable. See Jer. v. 31.

he hath turned me back] Not in the sense in which the metaphor is used in *v.* 8. It is the effect here of the nets. Judæa, like a hunted animal, endeavours to escape, but finds every outlet blocked by nets, and recoils from them with terror and a sense of utter hopelessness. And so she becomes *desolate*, the word applied to Tamar in her ruined state, 2 S. xiii. 20, where see note.

For the next word, *faint* is the right rendering. It refers to bodily languor and exhaustion.

14. *is bound by his hand*] The rendering of these words is very uncertain, as the verb is found only here, and the versions give us no help, but nothing has been offered better than the A. V. As the ploughman binds the yoke firmly upon the neck of the oxen, so does God compel Judah to bear the punishment of her sins.

they are wreathed, and...] Or, **they are knotted together**, *they come up upon my neck.* Judah's sins are like the cords by which the pieces of the yoke are fastened together, Jer. xxvii. 2, and which are represented as knotted and twined together till they form a bunch upon the neck, and bind the yoke around it so securely that it is impossible for her to shake it off.

he hath made...] Or, **it hath made** *my strength* **to stumble.** This is the regular meaning of the verb, and as this clause belongs to the second portion of the verse, it must still refer to the yoke. The yoke of punishment imposed upon Judah by God's hand, and securely knotted around her neck by the entangled bonds of her own sins, bows down her strength by its weight, and makes her totter and stumble beneath it.

the Lord] The third distich of the verse begins here, and with it a new turn of the lamentation. The yoke of punishment is now explained as meaning that Judah is given into the hands of those she cannot resist. *The Lord* is lit. Adonai, properly, my Lord, found in the prophecy of Jeremiah only in connection with the covenant name of God, *my Lord Jehovah.* In the Lamentations it is used by itself in fourteen places, while the name Jehovah is less prominent, as if in their punishment the people felt the lordship of the Deity more, and His covenant-love to them less. So Bp. Wordsworth.

15. *The Lord hath trodden under foot*] Or, *Adonai* **hath made contemptible.** The verb lit. means to put a thing into the balance, and especially to make it go up as the lighter weight, and so to make despicable. Here Adonai thus treats, not *her mighty men*, but *her war-horses*, put metaphorically for her heroes, champions. By being unable to resist the Chaldæans they have lost their fame and greatness.

Calvin points out that the words, *in the midst of me*, shew that they had not fallen gloriously in the battle-field, but remained ignominiously in the city, confessing their inability to fight.

he hath called an assembly] The word rendered assembly properly means *an appointed time*, and so is especially used of the great festivals, Lev. xxiii. 2. So then now Adonai has proclaimed a festival, not for me, but against me, to which the heathen are to be summoned to break my young men, cp. Jer. xv. 8, in battle.

the Lord hath trodden the virgin...] Or, *Adonai hath trodden the winepress for the virgin daughter of Judah.* The trampling of the grapes in the winepress is a metaphor regularly used of the execution of God's punitive judgments, see note on Isai. lxiii. 2, Jer. li. 14. So then here, God by slaying Judah's young men in battle is trampling for her the winepress of His indignation.

16. *For these* things *I weep*] In the three intermediate verses Jerusalem has given the proof that never was sorrow like unto her

17 Zion spreadeth forth her hands, *and there is* none to comfort her: the LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, *that* his adversaries *should be* round about him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

18 ¶ The LORD is [g] righteous; for I have rebelled against his [t] commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

19 I called for my lovers, *but* they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

20 Behold, O LORD; for I *am* in distress: my [h] bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: abroad the sword bereaveth, at home *there is* as death.

21 They have heard that I sigh: *there is* none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done *it:* thou wilt bring the day *that* thou hast [‖] called, and they shall be like unto me.

22 Let all their wickedness come before thee; and do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all my transgressions: for my sighs *are* many, and my heart *is* faint.

[g] Dan. 9. 7.
[t] Heb. *mouth.*
[h] Isai. 16. 11. Jer. 48. 36.
[‖] Or, *proclaimed.*

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sorrow, and the recital of her sufferings makes her burst forth into renewed tears.

that should relieve my soul] *That should revive my life*, see note on *v.* 11; and for *desolate* see note on *v.* 13.

17. *Zion spreadeth forth her hands*] To spread forth, *i.e.* stretch out, the hands is a symbol of prayer, Exod. ix. 29, 33, but Zion entreats in vain. There is no one to comfort her—not God, for He is chastising her, nor man, for all the neighbouring nations have become her enemies. See on *v.* 2.

that *his adversaries* should be *round about him*] Rather, **that those round about him should be his adversaries.** The charge given by God is not that those hostile to Jacob should be placed on his borders, but that all the neighbouring states should learn to regard him with aversion.

Jerusalem is as...] The words are virtually the same as in *v.* 8, and should be rendered, *Jerusalem* **is become an abomination** *among them.*

18. *I have rebelled...*] Lit. *I have resisted his mouth, i.e.* his word. Cp. Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14.

all people] Lit. *all* **peoples**, not people in the sing., *i.e.* the Jews, but in the plu., *i.e.* heathen nations.

19. *I called for...*] Rather, **to** *my lovers*, but they instead of coming to my call disappointed me.

while they sought their meat] Lit. *for they sought food for themselves to revive their souls.* The LXX. and Syr. complete the sense by adding, *and found none.* This is not to be regarded as a different reading, but as supplying what in the Hebrew is left to be inferred.

20. *my bowels are troubled*] Or, **are inflamed**, see note on Job xvi. 16, where the word is used of the redness of the countenance. As this gives a good sense here, viz. my bowels are red, inflamed with sorrow, it is unnecessary to seek further.

mine heart is turned within me] My heart is agitated so violently that it seems to have changed its position. The Syr. renders, *is overturned, upset.* Cp. note on Ps. xxxviii. 10.

at home there is *as death*] *i.e. in the house* there is, not death actually as abroad, where the sword makes childless, but pale pining forms, slowly wasting with hunger, and presenting the very image and appearance of death.

21. *They have heard that I sigh:* there is *none to comfort me*] Or, *They heard that I sigh,* **that I have** *no comforter.* As being part of the first portion of the verse, the latter clause is equally governed by *they heard* with the first, and our idiom requires the repetition of the word *that* to indicate it.

thou wilt bring the day...] Lit. **thou hast brought** *the day thou hadst proclaimed, and they shall be like unto me.* The day which Jehovah had announced is the day of Judah's punishment long foretold by the prophets, and so far the sense runs on evenly from the preceding clause, but in the last words there is a sudden turn of thought, more fully carried out in the next verse. Possibly the mention of the day that had been proclaimed brought to the prophet's mind the fact that, in Jer. xxv. 18—26, all these nations now triumphing over Jerusalem's fall were included in the judgment, and so Judah's punishment was the proof that they too would certainly be visited.

22. *do unto them, as thou hast done*] See Note at end of Chapter.

NOTE on CHAP. I. 22.

The verb עוֹלֵל, rendered *do* and *done*, is almost peculiar to the Lamentations, where it occurs four times, actively here and in chs. ii. 20, iii. 51, and in the passive in ch. i. 12. In another signification it is found in Jer. vi. 9, where it is rendered *glean*. As, however, the substantive derived from it, מַעֲלָלִים, regularly means *doings* both good, Jer. xxxv. 15, and evil, ibid. xliv. 22, the A.V. is right in thus simply translating it, and any deductions drawn from the sense of gleaning, though given it here by the Vulg., which renders, *Vindemia eos sicut vindemiásti me*, must be rejected as too uncertain.

CHAPTER II.

1 Jeremiah lamenteth the misery of Jerusalem.
20 He complaineth thereof to God.

HOW hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, *and* cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!

2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath † brought *them* down to the ground: he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof. † Heb. *made to touch.*

3 He hath cut off in *his* fierce anger all the horn of Israel: he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, *which* devoureth round about.

4 He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew † all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the taber- † Heb. *all the desirable of the eye.*

CHAP. II. This poem also divides itself like ch. i. into two nearly equal portions, in the first of which, *vv.* 1—10, the prophet describes the punishment which has fallen upon Zion; in the second, *vv.* 11—17, we have his lamentation, followed, in *vv.* 18, 19, by a summons to the wall of Zion to arise and pour out its heart in prayer before the Lord; after which, in *vv.* 20—22, we have the prayer itself, which takes the form of an expostulation with God for the great crimes permitted during the siege of Jerusalem.

1. *How hath the Lord covered*] Or, *How* **doth** *Adonai cover*. The prophet sees the divine anger settling upon Jerusalem like a dark thunder-cloud, and naturally upon this follows the second distich, **He hath cast down**, &c. The thunder-cloud breaks over them in a tempest by which *the beauty of Israel* is levelled to the ground. In Isai. lxiv. 11 the temple is called "the house of our beauty," and probably its destruction was chiefly in the prophet's mind, especially as the ark seems to be meant by God's footstool in the next clause. See note on Ps. xcix. 5.

2. *The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob*] It is still Adonai the ruler, not Jehovah the covenant-God, who punishes thus unsparingly. *To swallow up* means to destroy utterly, cp. its use in *vv.* 5, 8 marg., 16. The word, however, is particularly applicable to what follows. For *the habitations* are the dwellings of the shepherds in the pastures, see Note on Jer. vi. 2. Continuing then his metaphor, the prophet describes these as swallowed up by an earthquake, while the storm itself *throws down the fortified cities of Judah*. See note on Jer. v. 17.

he hath polluted the kingdom] *i.e.* profaned it, made it common or unclean, whereas before it was holy. The idea is taken from Ps. lxxxix. 39, where similarly the royal crown is profaned by being cast down to the ground.

3. *all the horn of Israel*] *i.e.* every means of defence. As the horn is the symbol of power, the cutting off of every horn means the depriving Israel of all power of resistance, while by the drawing back of God's right hand is signified the withdrawal of that special providence which used to protect the chosen people.

and he burned against Jacob] Or, *and* **he kindled a fire in** *Jacob*. In this clause God appears as the active enemy of Jacob, Himself applying the torch and kindling a fire, which spreads all around as a blazing conflagration.

4. *he stood with his right hand as an adversary*] Lit. *he stood as to his right hand as an adversary, i.e.* that right hand so often stretched out to help now grasps a weapon ready for Judah's destruction.

all that were *pleasant*] Or, *all that* **was** *pleasant to the eye*, not merely the children, but everything that pleased the eye is destroyed.

in the tabernacle] This belongs to the third distich,

In the tent of the daughter of Zion
He poured out like fire His fury.

nacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

5 The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

6 And he hath violently [a] taken away his [‖] tabernacle, as *if it were of* a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.

7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath [†] given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast.

8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from [†] destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.

9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes *are* among the Gentiles: the law *is* no

[a] Psal. 80. 12. & 89. 40. Isai. 5. 5.
[‖] Or, *hedge.*
[†] Heb. *shut up.*
[†] Heb. *swallowing up.*

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5. *The Lord was...*] Lit. *Adonai* has become *as an enemy, i.e.* He has shewn Himself by His acts to be Israel's enemy, see note on Jer. i. 2.

her palaces...his strong holds] For a similar change of gender Gerlach refers to Hos. viii. 14, which is lit. *I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour her palaces.* He explains the change thus: When speaking of the palaces, the great houses of Jer. lii. 13, Jeremiah was thinking of the city, and so gave it the fem. affix; but the mention of the *fortified cities*, see on *v.* 2, brought to his mind the whole country of Judah, and to it the masc. gender is more appropriate.

mourning and lamentation] These words both come from the same root, and might be rendered *groaning and moaning*, if it were thought advisable to imitate the similarity of sound and meaning in the original. They are quoted from Isai. xxix. 2, where see note.

6. *he hath violently taken away...*] The verb means to *treat with violence*, and so *to destroy violently*. The word rendered *tabernacle* is virtually the same as that rendered *covert* in Jer. xxv. 38, and means here such a tent of boughs as was put up at the feast of Tabernacles. And this explains the words *as a garden*, or (as the A. V. rightly gives the sense) *as it were of a garden, i.e. the Lord hath violently destroyed His booth as* a man might tear down in a few moments a shed erected for his temporary pleasure in *a garden.* Cp. Isai. i. 8.

his places of the assembly] *His great festivals*, see note on ch. i. 15. It is the word more correctly rendered *solemn feasts* in the next clause, and rightly joined there with *sabbaths*, the weekly, as the other were the annual festivals. There is an intensive force in Its being no longer Adonai, but Jehovah, who lets them pass into oblivion. He had once instituted them for His own honour, now He lets them lie forgotten.

and hath despised...the king and the priest] Or, *hath rejected*, though the verb also implies that the rejection was contemptuous, **king and priest**, without the articles. With the destruction of the city the royal authority fell: with the ruined temple and the cessation of the festivals the functions of the priest ceased.

7. *cast off...abhorred*] These two verbs are probably taken from Ps. lxxxix. 38, 39, and signify the rejection of anything with disdain.

By the *sanctuary* is apparently meant the Holy of Holies, and as the whole verse evidently refers to the temple, we must understand by *the walls of her palaces*, not those of the royal dwelling, but of the sacred buildings themselves.

they have made a noise...] *i.e.* just as on a feast-day the people were wont to raise a cry of exultation, so have the enemy shouted now, but their joyful shouting means sorrow and humiliation for the Jews.

8. *he hath stretched out a line*] See note on Isai. xxxiv. 11. It implies the systematic thoroughness of the destruction.

On the *rampart and wall* see note on Isai. xxvi. 1.

9. *Her gates are sunk into the ground*] Not are buried beneath heaps of rubbish, which is to turn a metaphor into a fact, but are so completely destroyed, without leaving a vestige behind, that you might suppose they had been swallowed up in an abyss.

her king] The prophet's lamentation, occupied chiefly before with the buildings of the city and temple, now turns to the people, and,

more; her [b] prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, *and* keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

11 Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings ‖swoon in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers, Where *is* corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom.

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach *is* great like the sea: who can heal thee?

14 Thy [c] prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to

[b] Psal. 74.

‖ Or, *faint.*

[c] Jer. 2. 8, & 5. 31. & 14. 14. & 23. 16.

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beginning with their temporal rulers, he bewails the sad fate of the king and princes, who were captives in the hands of the heathen. Zedekiah and the princes, when taken in the Arabah of Jericho, were not brought back to Jerusalem, but carried at once to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, Jer. xxxix. 5.

the law is *no* more] The Jewish law, the Torah, came to an end when it had no longer a local habitation. Its enactments were essentially those not of a catholic, but of a national religion, and the restoration of the nation with a material temple was indispensable to its continued existence. It was only when elevated to be a catholic religion, by being made spiritual, that it could do without ark, temple, and a separate people; see notes on Jer. iii. 16, xxxi. 31—34.

her prophets also find...] With the Torah the special gift of prophecy also ceased, since both were peculiar to the Theocracy, but it was not till the establishment of Christianity that they were finally withdrawn, or rather, merged in higher developments of grace. This great step onwards in God's dealings with mankind Jeremiah had joyfully foretold in the passages referred to above, but he now laments over the temporary removal of Judah's special privileges, before they had accomplished their office. At the return from exile they were for the time restored.

11. *Mine eyes...*] Having thus described the miserable condition of Judah, the prophet begins his actual lamentation.

my bowels are troubled] Or, *are inflamed*, see note on ch. i. 20.

my liver] As the heart was regarded by the Jews as the seat of the intellect, so the liver, as the chief of the large viscera classed together under the name of *bowels* (as we render the Hebrew word), was supposed to be the seat of the emotions. By the pouring out therefore of the liver upon the ground was meant that his feelings had entirely given way under the acuteness of his sorrow, and he could no longer restrain them. Naturally Jeremiah employs the terms in ordinary use, just as we now speak of a person having a fit of the spleen, or being humorous, without accepting the physical philosophy, on which those terms are based.

swoon] Better, *faint* (marg.). In the harrowing details, into which Jeremiah now enters, one of the most painful was the sight of the young children fainting in the streets for want of sustenance.

12. *They say to their mothers*] The tense means that they kept saying to their mothers: it was an oft-repeated cry.

corn and wine] These represent all kinds of food, solid and liquid.

when they swooned] Lit. *in fainting*. It was their last word when fainting from weakness, just as wounded men faint from loss of blood. So too the last clause is lit. *in breathing out their soul*, *i.e.* whilst expiring upon their mother's bosom.

13. *what shall I equal to thee...?*] In more modern language, *what shall I compare to thee?* Jeremiah has no prophetic testimony, *i.e.* no divine message, to deliver to Judah, nor can he offer her the ordinary human consolation of saying that others have had equal sorrow to bear. No! Zion's breach, *i.e.* her destruction, is measureless, like the illimitable ocean.

14. *Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee*] See Introd. p. 578. From its use in Ezek. xiii. 10—15, xxii. 28, Nägelsb. translates *whitewash;* for its true meaning, *stupidity*, given to it both in the LXX. and Vulg., see note on Jer. xxiii. 13.

to turn away thy captivity] The Syr. gives the right sense, *They have not disclosed to thee thy sins, that so thou mightest repent, and I might have turned away thy captivity.* Had

turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

† Heb. *by the way.*

15 All that pass † by clap *their* hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*, *Is* this the city that *men* call [d] The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?

[d] Psal. 48. 2.

16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed *her* up: certainly this *is* the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen *it*.

17 The LORD hath done *that* which he had [e] devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused *thine* enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.

[e] Lev. 26. 16. Deut. 28. 15.

18 Their heart cried unto the Lord, O wall of the daughter of Zion, [f] let tears run down like a

[f] Jer. 14. 17. chap. 1. 16

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the prophets done their duty honestly, instead of preaching peace when there was no peace, Israel's chastisement might have been averted.

false burdens] The word *burdens* does not mean here "prophecies of a minatory character," for evidently the false prophets assured the people of prosperity and deliverance. Nor did Jeremiah approve of the word in this sense, but on the contrary forbade its use (see note on Jer. xxiii. 33). But he applies it contemptuously to the predictions of the false prophets, who, wishing to play the part of Isaiah and Sennacherib over again when Nebuchadnezzar was advancing to the siege of Jerusalem, were studious to adopt a word which Isaiah uses more than any other prophet. But the *massa*, the burden of these pretenders proved *false* or *empty*, *i.e.* it failed of its accomplishment. On the deduction to be drawn from this see Jer. xxviii. 9.

causes of banishment] The Hebrew word signifies lit. *drivings out*. It does not occur elsewhere, and was probably formed by Jeremiah, with express reference to what he had said in Jer. xxvii. 10, 15. Speaking there as here of the false prophets, he had warned the people that the result of their teaching would be that God would *drive out* the Jews from their land.

15. *clap* their *hands*] The union, in this and the following verse, of scorn, hatred, and exultation over Jerusalem's fall, carries the mind involuntarily to the scene round the cross of the Redeemer. On the last words of the verse see Introd. p. 579.

16. *we have found, we have seen* it] The inserted *it* must be omitted. The intensity of the enemy's exultation is shewn by the heaping up of unconnected words, with each of which its own proper object must be supplied. We have found what we sought, have seen what we looked for, our hopes and longings are all fulfilled.

17. that *which he had devised*] Or, what he purposed. Addressing Zion, the prophet shews that this her ruin, over which her enemies so rejoiced, was no fortuitous event, but the fulfilment of God's determination, of which they had been forewarned from the days of old, *i.e.* the days when they were being formed into a nation. Twice in the Torah they had been told that if they lapsed into idolatry the heathen would punish them with all the miseries of a siege, ending in national overthrow, see Lev. xxvi. 14—39; Deut. xxviii. 15—68.

fulfilled] Or, finished, see note to Isai. x. 12. The verb lit. means to *cut off*, and so to complete.

18. *Their heart*] The pronoun *their* has occasioned much diversity of opinion among commentators as to who are the persons meant by it. It must, however, be the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and not their adversaries; for the verb is used properly of a cry of pain and sorrow from one needing help, cp. Jer. xxii. 20, xxv. 36, etc. The difficulty is probably occasioned by the bold appeal to the *wall of Zion* to pray with such fervency that her tears shall flow like a river. This appeal breaks the logical order of the sentences, and thus we do not get the cry of their heart till *vv.* 20—22: but it adds greatly to the poetic force of the passage, and is perfectly natural in an outburst of sorrow. Borne along by the intensity of his feelings, the prophet suddenly addresses the wall, which had so long been their shelter and defence, and bids it, as the representative of the people who had dwelt secure under its protection, to shed floods of tears on their behalf. Broken up by the enemy, it could be their guardian no longer, but by its ruins it might still cry unto the Lord in their behalf.

O wall] For the boldness of this appeal to the wall, already made to lament in *v.* 8, cp. Isai. xix. 31; Jer. xxii. 29; Hab. ii. 11; Luke xix. 40.

like a river] Or, *like a brook* or torrent. See note on Job vi. 15. The distinction in the Hebrew between *nâhâr*, a river, a steady even-flowing stream, and *nâhal*, a tor-

river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.

19 Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.

20 ¶ Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, *and* children ‖of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

‖ Or, *swaddled with their hands?*

21 The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain *them* in the day of thine anger; thou hast killed, *and* not pitied.

22 Thou hast called as in a solemn day my terrors round about, so that

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rent, rushing along furiously at one time, and dry shortly afterwards, is seldom noticed in the A. V., but the right sense is as appropriate here as the other is out of place.

give thyself no rest] The Hebr. word translated *rest* occurs only here, and properly means the torpor and numbness which follows upon excessive grief. Thus the verb is used of the *fainting* of Jacob's heart in Gen. xlv. 26, and of the hand stretched out in incessant prayer with weeping in Ps. lxxvii. 2, where see Note.

apple of thine eye] See note on Ps. xvii. 8.

19. *cry out*] *i.e. pray aloud*, see note on Jer. vii. 16. It is not the verb used in *v.* 18.

in, or **at**, *the beginning of the watches*] *At the beginning of each night-watch* means all the night through. Cp. Jerome's rendering, *per singulas vigilias*, in Ps. lxiii. 6 note; and for the Hebrew division of the night into three watches, see note on Judg. vii. 19.

lift up thy hands toward him] Or, **to** *him*, *i.e.* pray to Him, the lifting up of *the palms* of the hands being the attitude and symbol of prayer, see note on Jer. iv. 31. The wall, as the guardian of Jerusalem, or rather perhaps the city itself, the idea of which was contained in that of the wall, is to pray for the preservation of the young children now to be seen stretched upon the ground, fainting with hunger at the head of every street. The head of the street suggests the thought that these poor dying children are the first thing to be seen everywhere. You cannot enter a street, but at once this sad sight meets your eye.

life] Lit. *the soul*, but the A. V. gives the right interpretation.

For *faint* see on *v.* 11.

20. *Behold, O* LORD, *and consider*] *See, O Jehovah, and look!* words repeated from ch. i. 11. The prophet seems to feel that if Jehovah would only look and call back to mind who they were that were thus suffering, He would surely pity them. The next words are a question, *To whom hast thou acted thus?* It is not a heathen nation, but Thy own chosen Israel.

and *children of a span long*] This is the rendering of the Vulg. and Aquila, but has little to recommend it. The only other place where the verb occurs is Isai. xlviii. 13, where it is rendered *spanned*, but in the note *spanned out*, with a reference to Isai. li. 13, to indicate the true sense, which is to *stretch out*. But the phrase *stretched-out children* means, as explained in the Targ., *children in their swaddling-clothes*, cp. *v.* 22.

The masc. affix in *their fruit* is of no importance, and requires neither change of reading nor a far-fetched interpretation. Where the sense was clear, the Hebrew idiom was careless about concords. The inserted *and* is more than usually destructive of the beauty of the prophet's words. Neumann gives the sense of the passage very clearly, thus: *See, Jehovah, and look! Whom hast thou treated thus? Shall women eat their fruit—children whom they must still carry?* the swaddled child being one still needing to be nursed and borne in their arms.

21. *The young and the old*] Or, **The boy and the old man.** The word rendered *young* is that translated child in Jer. i. 6, and there explained. From the massacre of priests and prophets in the sanctuary, the prophet proceeds to that of all ages and sexes indiscriminately in all parts of the city. In the last clause the inserted *them* and *and* weaken, as usual, the intensity of the passage, which is lit. *Thou hast slain in the day of thy anger: thou hast killed, thou hast not pitied.*

22. *Thou hast called as in a solemn day*] *i.e. Thou* **callest** *like a feast day*, *i.e.* like the proclaiming of a festival, Lev. xxiii. 2; Isai. i. 13; Joel i. 14.

my terrors round about] These words are chosen with reference to the prophet's watch-word, for which see notes on Jer. vi. 25, xx. 3, 10, and mean that God now proclaims what Jeremiah had so often called out before, *Magor-missabib*. In this way the pronominal affix is to be explained. They are My Magor-missabibs, the oft-repeated cry of my lips. The phrase had probably been so often used by

in the day of the LORD's anger none escaped nor remained: those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

Jeremiah to express the imminent danger of the Jewish commonwealth, and the certainty of its destruction if it persisted in idolatry, that it had become associated with his name, and people had often perhaps jested at the manner in which it was ever upon his lips. But now that a victorious enemy was round about Jerusalem, the people in their sorrow would reflect with very different feelings upon this cry, and the prophet in referring to it seems to say, When I in old time called out *Terror round about*, men turned a deaf ear to me: but men must hear now that God loudly utters the same cry by the presence on every side of the conquering Chaldæans. See Note at end of Chapter.

none escaped nor remained] See notes on Jer. xlii. 17, xliv. 14.

those that I have swaddled] The verb of which the participle is rendered *of a span long* in *v.* 20, where see note.

NOTE on CHAP. II. 22.

Instead of *Thou proclaimest like a feast day "My terrors round about,"* the LXX. render, *he hath summoned to a feast day my parishes* (or neighbouring villages) *from round about;* but this translation, though adopted by Ewald, is to be rejected as the repetition of a mistake often made by the LXX., *e.g.* in Jer. vi. 25. The Vulg. gives the right meaning, shorn of the reference to Jeremiah's watch-word, in translating *those who terrify me*, and the Syr., *my enemies*. More exactly it means that state of alarm and danger which I have so often proclaimed.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The faithful bewail their calamities.* 22 *By the mercies of God they nourish their hope.* 37 *They acknowledge God's justice.* 55 *They pray for deliverance,* 64 *and vengeance on their enemies.*

I *AM* the man *that* hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.

2 He hath led me, and brought *me into* darkness, but not *into* light.

3 Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand *against me* all the day.

4 My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.

CHAP. III. In this elegy, which is both the most elaborate in form and the most sublime in its ideas of the five poems which compose the Book of Lamentations, we have set before us the image of the deepest suffering, passing on to the confession of sin, the acknowledgment of God's justice, and the prayer of faith for forgiveness. As Ewald points out, it is an inadequate view to regard the chapter as the expression of Jeremiah's personal feelings. "Very probably the prophet draws much of what he says from his own experience, but the whole that he sets forth is more than his own personality; it is the type and pattern of every individual. And here therefore is the summit and turning-point of the whole Book of Lamentations." He notices also how naturally the *I* passes into *we*. It is the ideal representation of that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

1. that *hath seen affliction*] *i.e.* hath experienced, suffered it. There is no article before affliction, and therefore it must not be limited to the affliction prophesied by the prophet, and which he had now lived to see accomplished upon Jerusalem.

For *the rod of his, i.e.* God's, *anger*, see Prov. xxii. 8.

3. *is he turned; he turneth*] Or, *surely against me* **hath he turned** *his hand* **again and again** *all the day long*. The first of the two verbs translated *turned*, is regularly used in Hebrew to express repeated action, and is to be translated in our idiom by the adverb *again*. See note on Jer. xii. 15, and cp. xviii. 4 marg., xxx. 10, xxxiv. 11, and notes on Jer. iv. 5, viii. 13, xiii. 18, xlix. 19, &c.

4. *hath he made old*] Or, **he hath wasted**. The verb means to *wear out by rubbing*, and so is often used of old clothes, but has itself nothing to do with the idea of age.

he hath broken my bones] A reminiscence of Isai. xxxviii. 13. This clause completes the representation of the sufferer's physical agonies. Here the idea is that of acute pain, while in the previous clause it was the slow wasting of his strength as he pined away in sorrow.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed *me* with gall and travel.

6 He hath set me in dark places, as *they that be* dead of old.

7 He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.

8 Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.

9 He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.

10 He *was* unto me *as* a bear lying in wait, *and as* a lion in secret places.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.

13 He hath caused the †arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.

† Heb. *sons.*

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5. *He hath builded...*] The metaphor is taken from the operations in a siege, and the second verb only completes the idea of the first, *He hath built against me round about.* Then dropping, as is his wont, the metaphor, Jeremiah declares what he is really encompassed by, viz. *bitterness*, lit. gall, for which see note on Jer. viii. 14, but probably it had long ceased to be regarded as metaphorical, and *labour.* In this sense the usual spelling is *travail*, but the A. V. has *travel*, the two words being really the same, and the difference of spelling having been settled in recent times. More exactly the Hebrew word means *weariness.*

6. *He hath set me*] *He hath* **made me to dwell** *in darkness, i.e.* in Sheol or Hades, *as those* **for ever** *dead.* On the phrase *dead of eternity* see note on Ps. cxliii. 3, and on *the dark places*, note on Ps. lxxiv. 20.

7. *He hath hedged*] The metaphor is taken from Job xix. 8, where the verb is rendered *fenced.* See also Hosea ii. 6. The prophet feels as if enclosed within walls, and fettered. The last words are lit. *he hath made heavy my brass*, the usual phrase being *two brasses*, for which see note on Judg. xvi. 21.

8. *shout*] *i.e.* **call for help.** See Ps. xviii. 41, where the verb is rendered *they cried.*

he shutteth out] The Hebr. verb means *to obstruct* or *shut in.* Jeremiah may cry for help, but God has so closed up all the avenues to the place in which he is immured, that his voice can find no way of egress. The idea is carried on in the next verse.

9. *He hath inclosed*] Or, **hedged**, as in *v.* 7. God hath built in Jeremiah's way a wall of hewn, and therefore of large stones, so that further advance is impossible.

he hath made my paths crooked] Or, *my paths he hath* **turned aside.** The idea of obstruction predominant in *vv.* 5—9 is maintained. Finding a solid wall built across his way, *i.e.* the main road, Jeremiah turns aside into by-ways, lit. paths worn by the feet, but finds them *turned aside*, so that they lead nowhither. If he walks upon them he finds himself in a maze, which brings him back after long wandering to the place whence he started.

10—18. In these verses the prophet reaches still higher ground. Up to this time he had dwelt upon the difficulties which hemmed in his path: he now shews that there are dangers. When, after long wanderings in the by-paths, he fancies that he has discovered an outlet, he finds there God actively opposing his escape like a lurking bear or a lion lying in ambush.

11. *He hath turned aside my ways*] The verb only occurs here, but the A. V. has probably given the right translation. As, however, the next verb means *to break in pieces*, the metaphor of the lion is evidently still maintained, and the meaning must be, "God, as a lion lying in wait, has made me turn aside from my path, but my flight was in vain, for springing upon me from His ambush He has torn me in pieces." This second verb also is only found here in the Hebr., but is common in Chaldee and Syriac in the sense given above.

he hath made me desolate] Or, **astonied.** As shewn in the notes on Jer. v. 30, xviii. 16, the root meaning of the word rendered *desolate* is appalled, struck dumb with terror or indignation, as in Ezra ix. 3, where it is rendered *astonied, i.e.* stupefied, see note on Jer. ii. 12. So then here, the sudden attack of the lion appals and stupefies the prophet so that he cannot flee. The word is a favourite one with Jeremiah, occurring more than forty times in his prophecy, while in Lamentations it is used thrice in ch. i., 4, 13, 16; and again in chs. iv. 5, v. 18.

12. *He hath bent his bow*] This new simile arises out of the former one, the idea of a hunter being suggested by that of the bear and lion. Thus in every way God opposes the sufferer. When he is in the jaws of the lion, and the hunter comes, it is not to save him. It is the poor fallen victim, not the beast of prey, which is the mark for his arrows. See note on Job xvi. 12.

13. *He hath caused*] Or, *He hath shot*

[a] Jer. 20. 7.

14 I was a [a]derision to all my people; *and* their song all the day.

[†] Heb. *bitternesses.*

15 He hath filled me with [†]bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.

[‖] Or, *rolled me in the ashes.*

16 He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath [‖]covered me with ashes.

[†] Heb. *good.*

17 And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgat [†]prosperity.

18 And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:

[‖] Or, *Remember.*

19 [‖]Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.

20 My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is [†]humbled in me.

[†] Heb. *bowed.*

21 This I [†]recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

[†] Heb. *make to return to my heart.*

22 ¶ *It is of* the LORD'S mercies

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into my reins the children of his quiver. For *reins* we should say *into my heart*, see note on Jer. xii. 2. There is no reason why the prosaic *arrows* should take the place of the poetical phrase used in the original. No one would be content with translating the expression of Horace, 'Od.' I. 22, 3, *pharetra gravida sagittis*, a quiver full of arrows.

14. *a derision*] See note on Jer. xx. 7, where the prophet makes the same complaint. Metaphor in this verse is discontinued, and Jeremiah shews the real nature of the arrows which rankled in him so deeply. There is no reason, but the contrary, for changing (with Ewald) *my people* into *peoples*.

their song] So Job xxx. 9.

15. *He hath filled me*] The Hebrew is, *He hath satiated, i.e. He hath* **filled me to the full with bitternesses**, *i.e.* bitter sorrows, cp. Job ix. 18. The being thus glutted with bitter food answers to the being made drunk with wormwood in the next clause.

16. *broken my teeth with gravel stones*] This is explained by Prov. xx. 17. Keeping up the metaphor of food in *v.* 15, Jeremiah complains that his bread was so filled with grit that in eating it his teeth were broken. Cp. the use of the verb in Ps. cxix. 20,

he hath covered me] The verb does not occur elsewhere, and is rendered by the LXX., *he hath given me ashes to eat*. This would give a sense better in keeping with this and the preceding verse, but the authority for it is insufficient, and probably the interpretation of the Targ. is right, *He hath pressed me down*, made me sink *in ashes*.

17. *thou hast removed my soul*] A quotation from Ps. lxxxviii. 14, where the verb is better rendered *cast off*, as it properly means *to reject with abhorrence*. The Vulg. and Syr. take the verb as third pers. sing. fem., and render, *my soul is driven away from peace* (Vulg.), or, *my soul is forgotten of peace* (Syr.). Keil defends this, but it is certainly the second pers. m. in Ps. lxxxviii. 14, and moreover the intransitive sense is rare.

peace] *i.e.* welfare, happiness, see note on Jer. xii. 12.

prosperity] Lit. **good**, *i.e.* I forgot what good is, lost the very idea of what it means.

18. *And I said*] *i.e.* I thought within myself. In these verses the prophet reaches the verge of despair. His peace and happiness are gone, even to the remembrance of them, and he has begun to doubt of the divine goodness. But with this begins the reaction, and by struggling against his despair he reaches at length firm ground, and feels that sorrow is but another form of God's love and goodness to His creatures.

19. *Remembering*] Or, **Remember** (margin). It is a prayer to Jehovah.

my misery] Or, *my* **homelessness**. Both this and the previous noun are quoted from ch. i. 7. As *affliction* occurs in this chapter in *v.* 1, *gall* in *v.* 5, and *wormwood* in *v.* 15, the prophet seems to begin his struggle into light by recapitulating the chief miseries in his previous lamentation.

20. *My soul hath* them *still in remembrance*] This may also be translated, *Thou wilt surely remember that my soul is depressed within me* (or, *composes itself in me*, Nägelsb.). Cp. *v.* 17, where the same grammatical ambiguity occurs. But there is no sufficient proof that the conjunction *and* can mean *that*, and Nägelsb.'s meaning of *sinking to rest* is at variance with the ordinary use of the verb. Moreover, the verse is based upon Ps. xlii. 5, and the same word should be used in translating both places. The verse is lit. *My soul remembereth indeed, and is cast down within me.*

21. *This I recall*] Rather, *This will I bring back to my heart, therefore will I hope.* As this is the third clause of those beginning with the letter Zain, the words *this* and *therefore* must refer to the two preceding clauses. The prophet brings back to mind that he is now humbled, and has prayed to God to have his sorrow remembered, and knowing that God hears the prayer of the contrite, he begins again to hope.

22—42. Nägelsb. points out that these twenty-one verses form the centre of the present poem, as it also holds the central place in the whole series of the Lamentations. In them we

that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

23 *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness.

[b] Psal. 16. 5 & 73. 26. & 119. 57. Jer. 10. 16.

24 The LORD *is* my [b] portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

25 The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him.

26 *It is* good that *a man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

27 *It is* good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne *it* upon him.

29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

30 He giveth *his* cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever:

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find the riches of God's grace and mercy set forth in the brightest colours, but no sooner are they ended than the prophet resumes the language of woe, and again depicts his own and the people's sufferings in terms of the deepest anguish. In this portion each three verses beginning with the same letter form a whole, in the first of which, *vv.* 22—24, the prophet shews that God still has mercy for His people.

22. *that we*] This is one of the places where the prophet passes naturally from *I* to *we*, shewing that even when using the first person, he is speaking as the representative of all sufferers. See introd. to this ch.

24. *The* LORD *is my portion*] *My portion is Jehovah*, see Num. xviii. 20; Ps. xvi. 5, &c.

therefore will I hope in him] A more full expression of the confidence present in the prophet's mind in *v.* 21, but based now upon God's faithfulness in shewing mercy.

25. *The* LORD *is good*] In these three verses, each beginning in the Hebrew with the word *good*, we have first the fundamental idea that Jehovah Himself is good, and if good to all, then especially is He so to those who being in adversity can yet *wait* in confidence upon His mercy.

26. *and quietly wait*] Lit. *and be in silence*, *i.e.* abstain from all complaining. The connection with the previous verse is that if Jehovah be good, then it is also man's good when in sorrow to remember God's attribute, because thus hope arises within him, and gives him fortitude; whereas otherwise he would increase his sufferings by yielding to grief, and making unseemly complaints.

27. *the yoke in his youth*] Or, *a yoke*. By bearing a yoke in his youth, *i.e.* being called upon to suffer in early age, a man learns betimes this lesson of silent endurance, and so finds it more easy to be calm and patient in later years. So far from this proving the conclusion drawn by Michaelis, that Jeremiah wrote this poem in his youth, and therefore on the occasion of king Josiah's death, its meaning rather is that whereas in early youth he had chafed over affliction, Jer. xv. 10, xx. 7—18, now he feels that there was a wise purpose in all he had been called upon to undergo. Early sorrow had brought him early peace.

28—30. *He sitteth*] These three verses all begin with verbs in the apocopated future, and there is no reason why they should not be translated in the usual way:—

Let him sit alone and keep silence;
For He [God] **hath laid** the yoke *upon him.*
Let him place his mouth in the dust;
Perchance there is hope.
Let him offer his cheek to him that smiteth him;
Let him be filled to the full with reproach.

The prophet has just said that it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, but it is so only if he bear it rightly. To attain then to this happy result, let him learn resignation, expressed by sitting in silence: and as a reason for not complaining, the prophet refers to Him who has laid the yoke upon him, the reference being made the more solemn by the omission of the name of the Deity. Men too well know whose is the power which lays the yoke on their necks to make more than a general allusion necessary. In *v.* 29 this reverential silence is described as putting the mouth in the dust, and so lying prostrate before the Deity; while in *v.* 30 the harder task is imposed of bearing contumely with meekness, Matt. v. 39, and being content to be filled full, lit. satiated, with reproach, not shrinking even from the last dregs of the cup. As Calvin observes, many who submit readily to God are indignant when the suffering comes through human instrumentality.

31—33. In these three verses we have reason for the resignation urged in the previous triplet. The first reason is that punishment does not last for ever, a quotation from Ps. lxxvii. 7, where also it is not Jehovah, the covenant God, but Adonai the ruler, who

32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

† Heb. *from his heart.* 33 For he doth not afflict †willingly nor grieve the children of men.

34 To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,

‖ Or, *a superior.* 35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of ‖the most High,

‖ Or, *seeth not.* 36 To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord ‖approveth not.

37 ¶ Who *is* he [c]*that* saith, and it cometh to pass, *when* the Lord commandeth *it* not? [c] Psal. 33. 9.

38 Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not [d]evil and good? [d] Amos 3. 6.

39 Wherefore doth a living man ‖complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? ‖ Or, *murmur.*

40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.

41 Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

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does not cast off for ever. Secondly, in proof of this it is declared that even in chastisement mercy is stronger than justice; while, lastly, God never afflicts *willingly*, lit. **from His heart**, for God is love.

34—36. These three verses form one connected sentence, all depending upon the last clause, *Adonai approveth not*, and themselves growing out of *v.* 33. As affliction is never willingly laid on any one by God, so neither does He approve of wanton cruelty inflicted by one man on another. Of these, the first mentioned is the trampling under foot of prisoners of war. Probably Jeremiah daily witnessed scenes which taught him how cruel man is wherever his power is unrestrained by fear of consequences to himself. The other two are more ordinary offences, the first the procuring an unjust sentence in a cause *before the face of the Most High*, *i.e.* before a legal tribunal acting in the name of God, see Exod. xxi. 6, xxii. 8, 9, where the judges are called *elohim*, God. The other the perversion of justice generally.

36. *the Lord approveth not*] Lit. *Adonai hath not seen* or *looked upon*, *i.e.* with pleasure and approval. Many, however, render, *Has not Adonai seen?* and so the Targ., *Can it be that such things shall not be revealed before God?* But the rendering of the A. V. is best, our idiom requiring the present tense, and the sense being confirmed by 1 S. xvi. 7.

37—39. Jeremiah now reaches deeper thoughts. Though God is love (*vv.* 31—33), and by His nature abhors all wanton cruelty (*vv.* 34—36), yet affliction does come, and it is God who sends it. Why then does a loving God, who disapproves of suffering when inflicted by man upon man, Himself send sorrow and misery? This is answered by the closing words, that it is *because of sins*.

37. *Who* is *he*...] Lit. *Who is this that spake and it was done*, though *Adonai commanded it not?* The words are taken from Ps. xxxiii. 9.

38. The interrogative in this verse should be made more prominent. It is lit. *From the mouth of the Most High doth there not proceed the evil and the good?*

39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain*] The verb elsewhere occurs only in Num. xi. 1, where also it is rendered in the A.V. *complain*, but it rather means to *sigh*, and so to murmur. *Living* is emphatic: as long as God spares a man's life why does he murmur? The chastisement is really for his good; only let him use it aright, and he will be thankful for it in the end.

a man for the punishment of his sins] Or, *every one for his sins.* The right translation probably is, Let *each man* sigh *for*, *i.e.* because of, *his sins.* Instead of murmuring because God sends him sorrow, let him rather mourn over the sins which have made punishment necessary. But the other versions agree with the A.V. in taking this clause as a continuation of the question, making the sense to be, Why does a man as long as his life is spared murmur *for his sins? i.e.* for the necessary results of them in chastisement. They distinguish, however, between the two words used in the Hebrew for *man*. Thus the Vulg., *Quid murmuravit homo vivens, vir pro peccatis suis?* The distinction can be preserved in our language only by taking the second term as generic, and so rendering *every one.*

40—42. This triplet completes the present section, and in it from the thought that sorrow is caused by sin the prophet proceeds to urge men to search out their faults and amend them.

40. *and turn again to the LORD*] Or, *and return to Jehovah.* The prep. in the Hebr. is very forcible, implying "Let us go back, not half way, but the whole" (Nägelsb.). Cp. Hos. xiv. 2, 3.

41. *with* our *hands*] The Hebr. is remarkable, being lit. *Let us lift up our heart unto our hands unto God in heaven*, as if the heart first lifted up the hands, and then with them mounted up in prayer to God. It expresses thus the truth that in real prayer the

42 We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.

43 Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied.

44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that *our* prayer should not pass through.

45 Thou *hast* made us *as* the [e] offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

47 [f] Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction.

48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

50 Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth [†] mine heart [‖] because of all the daughters of my city.

52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause.

[e] 1 Cor. 4. 13.

[f] Isai. 24. 17.

[†] Heb. *my soul.*

[‖] Or, *more than all.*

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outward expression is caused by the emotion stirring within. For *the hands*, lit. *the palms*, see note on Jer. iv. 31.

42. *We...thou*] The pronouns are emphatic, and imply a strong contrast. The second clause forms the transition to the renewed lamentation which is continued to the end of the chapter.

43—66. So far from pardoning, God is still actively punishing His people. The Chaldæans are trampling the holy city under foot, and the inhabitants are about to go into captivity. And though the central portion of the poem has elevated suffering into its right position as the corrective of sin and the preparation for grace, yet it is hard to bear for the present, and the prophet falls back into the sorrows which he so vividly expressed in *vv.* 1—21. In this section each three verses no longer form a whole in so marked a manner as in the central portion, but they fall into groups of unequal length, as we saw was sometimes the case also in the first part.

43. *Thou hast covered with anger*] Rather, *Thou hast covered* **Thyself** *with wrath and pursued us.* The verb used here does not mean to cover in the sense of overwhelming, but of clothing and sheltering oneself. Either *thyself* may be supplied from *v.* 44, or the clause may more literally be rendered *Thou hast made a covering of wrath and pursued us.* In the next verse the covering is a cloud, enveloping the Deity with so dense a veil, that prayer can find no means of passing through; here the covering is one of wrath, wrapped in which God stalks forth to pursue and slay His own people.

45. *Thou hast made us* as *the offscouring*] Or, *Thou hast made us* **offscourings** *and...*

46. *have opened their mouths*] Cp. ch. ii. 16.

47. *Fear and a snare*] Quoted from Jer. xlviii. 43, where the words are more correctly translated **Fear and the pit**, the pit however being more exactly a pitfall made for catching wild beasts. Dr Alexander suggests that *fear* like the Latin *formido* might also be some hunting contrivance for driving the game into the pitfalls.

desolation] Or, **devastation.** The Hebr. word is found only here, but the verb is rendered *to lay waste* in Isai. xxxvii. 26. Desolation is such a favourite word with Jeremiah that it should not be confused even with a term of kindred meaning.

48—51. Four verses are here grouped together, expressive of the deep sympathy of the prophet, which pours itself forth in abundant tears over the distress of his people. With *v.* 48 cp. ch. i. 16, ii. 11, and Jer. ix. 1.

49. *trickleth down*] The Hebr. verb means *pours out*, and is rendered *spilt* in 2 S. xiv. 14. It is something therefore more copious than trickling.

ceaseth not] Lit. *is not silent*, a not unusual metaphor in Jeremiah; see Jer. xiv. 17. On the prophet's use of *silence* see note on Jer. xxv. 37.

intermission] The word comes from the same root as that rendered *rest* in ch. ii. 18, and has the same meaning.

50. This verse is subordinate to *v.* 49. Until Jehovah once again regards His people the prophet's tears cannot cease.

51. *Mine eye affecteth mine heart*] Or, *Mine eye* **causeth pain to my soul**, *i.e.* maketh my soul ache.

because of all the daughters of my city] *i.e.* because of the sad fate of the maidens whose sufferings Jeremiah bewails in ch. i. 4, 18, ii. 10, 21, v. 11. Ewald understands by the term the daughter-towns of Jerusalem, and Calvin adopts the rendering of the marg. of the A. V., and says that Jeremiah exceeded even the softness of women in his abundant weeping.

52. *Mine enemies...without cause*] These words go together in the Hebr. *Those who*

53 They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.
54 Waters flowed over mine head; *then* I said, I am cut off.
55 ¶ I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the low dungeon.
56 Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.
57 Thou drewest near in the day *that* I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.
58 O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.
59 O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong: judge thou my cause.
60 Thou hast seen all their ven-

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without cause are mine enemies have hunted me sore like a bird. The idea is that of tiring a bird down by continuous pursuit. See for the metaphor Ps. xi. 1. These "enemies without cause" can scarcely be the Chaldæans; more probably the prophet is now speaking of his personal sorrows, and especially of the illtreatment received during the siege of Jerusalem from those to whom he had done no wrong.

53. *They have cut off my life in the dungeon*] Or, *They* **destroyed** *my life in the pit, i.e.* tried to destroy it by casting me into the cistern, Jer. xxxviii. 6.

and cast a stone upon me] De Wette, Neumann, and others understand by this that they covered the mouth of the cistern with a stone, and so left the prophet to die. This is apparently the sense in which the words are taken in the LXX. and Vulg., but the Syr. and Targ. render *they threw stones at me.* Upon the whole it is more probable that the princes covered the mouth of the cistern with a stone, possibly its usual protection, than that they threw stones at the prophet when lowered into it. Such an act would certainly have been mentioned in Jer. xxxviii., and besides it is plain that what they wished was, not to kill Jeremiah by violence, but to leave him to perish, considering that so they were not answerable for his blood. See note on Jer. xxxviii. 6.

54. *Waters flowed over mine head*] More probably a figurative expression for great mental trouble, than a literal account of what he suffered in the cistern, which we are expressly told was dry, Jer. xxxviii. 6.

I am cut off] Apparently taken from Ps. lxxxviii. 5; Isai. liii. 8, and meaning I am as good as dead, and not from Ps. xxxi. 22, where the sense is I am abandoned by God.

55—66. The last twelve verses form a prayer for deliverance and for vengeance upon his enemies. Similarly chs. i. and ii. had each ended in prayer.

55. *out of the low dungeon*] The same words are better rendered *the lowest pit* in Ps. lxxxviii. 6. Lit. they signify *the pit of the lower regions.* Hence many interpret it of *the pit of Sheol,* but it need only mean *a very deep pit* (Gesen.). Several critics consider that Ps. lxix. was composed by Jeremiah, and is the prayer referred to here. But it is quite as possible that the prophet only repeated the Psalm; see introd. there, but with the notes on *vv.* 1, 2 cp. the words here in *v.* 54.

56. *Thou hast heard*] Or, *Thou* **heardest** *my voice,* and didst send Ebed-melech to deliver me,

hide not thine ear] There is no difficulty in an imper. following a perfect: for though the prophet pointedly refers to one special wrong done him by his enemies, and the deliverance from it by God, yet the being cast into the cistern was not the prophet's only sorrow, nor does he forget that he is the exponent also of the sorrows of the Jewish Church. As then Jehovah in past time had heard and answered prayer, so now he beseeches Him to open His ear unto it.

at my breathing] This is the lit. meaning, but as in Exod. viii. 15, the only other place where the word is found, and where it is rendered in the A. V. *respite,* the real sense is *relief.* So we speak of having a breathing-time. The whole clause signifies *Hide not thine ear to my relief to my cry, i.e.* to my cry for relief.

57. In this verse the prophet returns to the first clause of *v.* 56, and shews more fully how God heard his voice. Thus these three verses, which all begin with the same letter, Koph, form a whole, the last two being the answer to the call for help from the cistern in *v.* 55.

58. God now appears as the prophet's next of kin, pleading the lawsuits of his soul, *i.e.* the controversies which concern his salvation, and rescuing his life, in jeopardy through the malice of his enemies. The triplet, *vv.* 58—60, expresses Jeremiah's confidence in God's active aid. Cp. Jer. l. 34.

59. *wrong*] This word like so many others in this book does not occur elsewhere, but the verb is used in *v.* 36 of the perversion of justice. The prophet appeals to Jehovah, who has witnessed the manner in which men pervert his rights, to interfere for him and Himself judge his cause.

geance *and* all their imaginations against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, *and* all their imaginations against me;

62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their device against me all the day.

63 Behold their sitting down, and their rising up; I *am* their musick.

64 ¶ Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands.

65 Give them [1]sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them.

66 Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the [s]heavens of the LORD.

[1] Or, *obstinacy of heart.*

[s] Psal. 8. 3.

CHAPTER IV.

1 Zion bewaileth her pitiful estate. 13 She confesseth her sins. 21 Edom is threatened. 22 Zion is comforted.

HOW is the gold become dim! *how* is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the [||]sea monsters draw out

[||] Or, *sea calves.*

60, 61. *imaginations*] Or, **devices**, as in Jer. xi. 19, xviii. 18.

62. *The lips*] Or, *Even the lips.* This verse depends upon the verb *thou hast heard* in *v.* 61, to which each clause severally corresponds. For *the lips of my adversaries* is equivalent to *their reproach:* and *their device*, lit. *their* **meditation**, what they meditate upon, answers to *their devices.*

63. *their sitting down, and their rising up*] *i.e.* all the ordinary actions of their life.

musick] Or, **song.** The word does not occur elsewhere, but it differs from that used in Ps. lxix. 12 only in more exactly signifying *the subject of the song*, than the singing.

64—66. In this triplet Jeremiah prays that a just retribution may overtake his enemies. The first verse is taken from Ps. xxviii. 4, and is repeated by St Paul against Alexander the coppersmith, 2 Tim. iv. 14. The versions and the Targ. all render these verses not as imperatives, but as futures, *Thou shalt render unto them a recompence*, &c.

65. *Give them sorrow of heart*] Or, *Thou wilt give them* **blindness** *of heart.* Cp. *the vail upon the heart*, 2 Cor. iii. 15.

66. *Persecute...*] Or, *Thou shalt pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under the heavens of Jehovah.*

CHAP. IV. In this poem the distinctive idea as compared with chs. i. and ii. is, that the miseries which have befallen Judah are the punishment of her sin, and will end therefore, when chastisement has had its proper effect, in her restoration. In the first eleven verses the prophet describes the terrible sufferings of the inhabitants of Jerusalem during the siege, heightened by the contrast with the worth of the sufferers and the splendour in which they had lived. But this signal punishment has been occasioned by the sins chiefly of the prophets and priests, *vv.* 12—16, and by the people having put their trust in man, *vv.* 17—20. But with repentance will come restoration, and thereupon malevolent Edom, as the type of those who rejoice over the downfall of God's people, will be visited, *vv.* 21, 22. The verses in this poem are divided into two portions, and not into three, like those of the previous chapters.

1. *the stones of the sanctuary*] Or, **the hallowed stones**, lit. stones of holiness. As a comparison of this verse with *v.* 2 proves that *gold* is used metaphorically for all that was precious in Judah, so must we interpret these consecrated stones in a similar manner of the people themselves. The actual stones of the temple would not be thus thrown about so widely as to be the first thing everywhere that met the eye, but the prophet has already affirmed this of the young children dying of hunger, ch. ii. 19.

2. *The precious sons of Zion*] The whole nation was consecrated to God, and formed "a kingdom of priests," Exod. xix. 6. The words therefore must not be limited to any portion of the people (the nobility, Henderson), for this sanctity of all the Israelites was essential to the typical representation by them of the Christian Church, for which see 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. For *precious* see the note on *honourable women* in Ps. xlv. 9, where the Hebr. word is the fem. of the adj. used here.

comparable to fine gold] Lit. *weighed with* **solid gold**, and so equal to their weight in it. Three kinds of gold are mentioned in these two verses, which the A.V. distinguishes as *gold*, *most fine gold*, and *fine gold.* This last is rather **solid gold**, as rendered above. With this is contrasted the hollow pitcher, easily broken, and made of materials of no intrinsic value, but deriving its worth from mere human labour.

3. *sea monsters*] Or, **jackals.** The or-

the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people *is become* cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, *and* no man breaketh *it* unto them.

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

6 For the ‖punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was [a]overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.

‖ Or, *iniquity.*

[a] Gen. 19. 25.

7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy *in* body than rubies, their polishing *was* of sapphire:

† Heb. *darker than blackness.*

8 Their visage is †blacker than a

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dinary form of the plu. is *tannim*, see note on Jer. xiv. 6, which the Masorites have substituted for *tannin* here. The change, however, is unnecessary, as *tannin* is equally a plu. of *tan*, a jackal, though it is an Aramaic form. The objections to *tannin* being a crocodile are that *tannin* in this sense is sing., but the verb here is plu.; that the comparison as shewn by the ostrich in the next clause is with animals which inhabit the desert; that the young of crocodiles are not called *whelps;* and that though the term *tannin* may possibly include the cetacean mammals, yet properly it belongs to reptiles, and the assertion that they give suck is apocryphal.

their young ones] *Their* **whelps**. The term is applied only to the young of dogs, lions, and the like.

is become *cruel*] Lit. *is for a cruel one*, **is become** *cruel*, the italics of the A.V. being virtually contained in the Hebr. For the ostrich as the representative of a negligent mother, see Job xxxix. 13—17.

5. *are desolate*] See notes on chs. i. 13, iii. 11. It represents the abandonment of all hope, no longer by the children, but by the adults, as faint with starvation they sit down to perish in the streets.

they that were brought up in scarlet] Lit. *those that were carried upon scarlet;* the word properly refers to young children in arms, and like the porphyrogeniti of the Greeks means those of the highest birth.

embrace dunghills] *i.e.* lie in the dirt. The contrast is between the delicacy and costliness of the shawls in which they were wrapped in their infancy, and the forlorn penury which makes them now content to stretch themselves on the dirtheaps of the city.

6. *For the punishment of the iniquity...*] Rather, *For* **the iniquity** *of the daughter of my people was greater than* **the sin** *of Sodom.* The prophet deduces this conclusion from the greatness of Judah's misery; for as God punishes by measure, Jer. xxx. 11, the greatness of the sin may be inferred from the severity of the chastisement. We must not, however, press this doctrine to extremes, Luke xiii. 1—5.

no hands stayed on her] Or, *no hands were round about her.* The comparative lightness of Sodom's punishment consisted first in its suddenness, and secondly, in that it came direct from God. So David chose pestilence rather than injuries inflicted by human hands, 2 S. xxiv. 14. "Sodom's sufferings in dying were brief; there were no starving children, no mothers cooking their offspring for food" (Nägelsb.).

7. *Her Nazarites*] Not *princes* (Noldius, Ges., Keil), nor *crowned ones* (Nägelsb.), but Nazarites, as rendered by all the ancient versions. Ges.'s reference to Gen. xlix. 26; Deut. xxxiii. 16, proves nothing. Joseph is there called a Nazarite among his brethren for the same reason for which the Nazarites are mentioned here, because from their temperance they were remarkable for health and personal beauty, besides being held in religious veneration. Nazarites were not called into existence by the law in Num. vi. 1—21, but regulated only, and the reference to them in Amos ii. 11, 12, is a proof that the order had by no means fallen into desuetude. The argument that because Nazarite properly means *separate* —itself a doubtful derivation—Nazarites may mean princes, as being a separate and distinguished class of persons, is no more true than that Pharisees, which really has that meaning, or separatists in our own language, may mean princes.

they were more ruddy in body than rubies] Or, *than* **corals**. Delitzsch, 'Psychol.' 75, refers to this place, and Song of Sol. v. 10, in proof that red on white, the normal colour of the human complexion, is the prime colour of beauty.

their polishing was *of sapphire*] Or, **their shape was** *a sapphire.* The allusion is no longer to colour, but to their form, the meaning of the Hebr. word being lit. *cut*, answering to the French *taille.* Their shape was exact and faultless as is the cutting of a precious stone.

8. *Their visage is blacker than a coal*]

coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

9 *They that be* slain with the sword are better than *they that be* slain with hunger: for these [1] pine away, stricken through for *want of* the fruits of the field.

[1] Heb. *flow out.*

10 The hands of the pitiful women [b] have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

[b] Deut. 28. 57. [2] Kin. 6. 29.

11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

12 The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

13 ¶ [c] For the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

[c] Jer. 5. 31 & 23. 21.

14 They have wandered *as* blind *men* in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood, [‖] so that men could not touch their garments.

[‖] Or, *in that they could not* but *touch.*

Their **form**, their whole person, see 1 S. xxviii. 14; Isai. liii. 2, **has become darker than blackness** (marg.). For the blackening effect of sorrow and disease upon the complexion, see Job xxx. 30.

it is withered, it is become like a stick] **It has become dry like a piece of wood.** The A.V., and the versions generally, have erroneously divided this sentence into two clauses, from having taken the adj. *dry* for a verb.

9. *for these pine away*, &c.] Most commentators adopt this rendering, which has the authority of the Vulg.; but as the verb properly means to *flow out* (marg.), and *stricken through* is never used metaphorically, but only literally of those pierced with a weapon, Prof. Hornblower refers this clause to those *slain with the sword*, and translates, *Happier were those slain by the sword, those pierced ones whose lives gushed forth while yet there were fruits of the field*, lit. *from the produce of the field*, *i.e.* going directly from it to battle and being slain outright before famine began to appear. The clause is undoubtedly difficult.

10. *pitiful*] *i.e.* tender-hearted, compassionate. *Meat* is used in its old meaning for *food*, as in Ps. lxix. 21. With this verse cp. Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 56, 57; and for the actual occurrence of so horrible a fact during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, see Josephi 'Bell. Jud.' x. 9.

12. With this verse begins the description of the causes which had led to an end so miserable that even to the heathen it seemed little less than a miracle. Though Jerusalem had been several times captured, 1 K. xiv. 26; 2 Chro. xxiv. 23 (?); 2 K. xiv. 13, xxiii. 33—35, yet not only had it subsequently been so strongly fortified by Uzziah and his successors as to be made virtually impregnable; but since the defeat of Sennacherib there was probably a general idea that it could not be taken. Its present capture by Nebuchadnezzar had cost him a year and a half's siege.

13. *the blood of the just*] The narrative in Jer. xxvi. 7—24 exhibits priests and prophets as the prime movers in an attempt to silence the word of God by putting Jeremiah to death. And though the people had their share of guilt in permitting their prejudices and passions to be stirred up, yet those were most to blame who urged them on. So though our Lord laid the blame of persecution upon the Scribes and Pharisees, Matt. xxiii. 29—33, yet He also said that it was Jerusalem as a whole community that killed the prophets, and whose house was therefore to be left unto them desolate, *vv.* 37, 38.

As *v.* 14 is apparently a continuation of the description of the conduct of the priests and prophets, the sense must be completed here by prefixing to *v.* 13 some such words as *All this has happened:* and so the Targ. takes *vv.* 12, 13 together thus: *The kings of the earth regarded it as incredible that Nebuchadnezzar could ever have captured Jerusalem. The measure of justice answered and said, All this would not have taken place but for the sins of her prophets, who prophesied falsely to her, and for the iniquities of her priests, who burned incense to idols, and so caused the blood of the innocent who died within her.*

14. *They have wandered*] Lit. *They reeled*, moved to and fro, as in Isai. vii. 2, where it is rendered *moved*. Rosenm. gives the right sense, They wandered through the city blinded by the insatiable lust of slaughter. The verb expresses the uncertain gait of a blind man. The result is that they who ought to be holy, as being God's ministers consecrated to His service, are so defiled with blood that it is

15 They cried unto them, Depart ye; ‖*it is* unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn *there*.

16 The ¹anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will no more regard them: they respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders.

17 As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have watched for a nation *that* could not save *us*.

18 They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is come.

19 Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: *they* pur-

Or, *ye polluted.*

Or, *face.*

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even a pollution to touch their garments, *so that men cannot touch them, i.e.* from fear of defilement.

15. *They cried unto them*] *i.e.* men cried to these priests, *Away! unclean! away! away! touch not.* The imper. *away*, or *keep off*, is plu., being addressed to these priestly assassins whom the people in the streets in fear of pollution command to get out of the way; but *unclean* is sing., being the cry of the leper whenever he appeared in public. According to the law the leper was himself to cry *unclean*, Lev. xiii. 45; but here it is the warning shout of those who meet the murderers.

when they fled away and wandered] The Masorites are right in taking this as a clause complete in itself, *when they fled away they also wandered.* The prophet supposes that these priests, upon finding themselves the objects of general abhorrence, fled away from the city, but with uncertain steps, not knowing where to find refuge. In the streets they had reeled through lust of murder: now they reel from helplessness, and for the reason given in the next clause, *men said among the heathen, They shall tarry* here *no longer.* They find themselves abhorred abroad as well as at home.

This verse looks so much like the record of a real occurrence, especially where the heathen are spoken of as refusing Jewish priests leave to sojourn among them, that we must regard the view of Pareau and Ewald as at least possible, that *vv.* 14—16 are founded upon something that actually took place, if not during the siege, at all events during the last years of Zedekiah's reign. When the question of revolt was being decided upon, and again when it was being debated whether Jerusalem should endure a siege or not, we can well understand that party feuds ran high, and that blood was shed by priests and prophets, who afterwards finding themselves the objects of popular hatred, fled away only to find themselves refused the right of sojourn by the neighbouring states. As *vv.* 17—20 are historical, there is no reason why *vv.* 14—16 may not equally be so.

16. *The anger...*] Lit. *The countenance of Jehovah hath scattered them*, has driven these outlawed priests hither and thither, *and he will no more regard them* with favour.

they respected not] *Men respected not*, these being either the people who in *v.* 15 treated the priests as lepers, or the heathen who drove them from their territories.

17—20. In these four verses Jeremiah gives a rapid sketch of the last days of the siege and the capture of the king. We have the intense watching for the approach of an Egyptian army, the growing severity of the siege which made it dangerous to go into the open spaces because of the missiles of the enemy, the desperation of the king, his flight, the rapidity of the pursuit, his capture, and the abandonment with it of all hope.

17. *As for us, our eyes as yet*] Rather, *Still do our eyes waste away* looking *for our vain help.* The A.V. as usual accepts the Kri, but the C'tib is preferable, and is explained as above by Maurer and Gesenius.

in our watching] Many modern commentators, including the lexicons of Ges. and Fürst, translate *on our watchtower.* This very well suits the whole verse, in which the prophet has carried us back to the actual scenes of the siege.

18. *They hunt...*] Or, **They hunted** *our steps that we could not go out into the streets.* The verb *to hunt* does not mean so much to pursue game as to lie in ambush for it, and catch it by snares; and the streets are lit. *the wide places*, especially at the gates. Towards the end of the siege the towers erected by the enemy would command these places, and though no great damage might be done by the arrows of the Chaldæans, yet such spots would be avoided, and the sight of the towers advancing in height would strike the besieged with terror, and give rise to such exclamations as are graphically given in the rest of the verse.

19. *Our persecutors are...*] **Our pursuers were** *swifter than the eagles of heaven*, cp. Jer. iv. 13, xlviii. 40.

they pursued us] *They* **chased** *us.* The verb lit. means to be hot, and so to do any thing eagerly. This verse may refer either to Zedekiah and his party, or to such others of the people as attempted to flee. The use of

sued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

[d] Gen. 2. 7. 20 The [d] breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

21 ¶ Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

22 ¶ ‖The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will ‖discover thy sins.

‖ Or, *Thine iniquity.*

‖ Or, *carry the captive for thy sins.*

CHAPTER V.

A pitiful complaint of Zion in prayer unto God.

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the first pers. plu. does not shew that Jeremiah himself tried to escape. As regards the *mountains* and *wilderness* here spoken of, the route in going from Jerusalem to Jericho leads first over heights, beginning with the Mount of Olives, and then descends into the plain of the Ghôr (Nägelsb.).

20. *The breath of our nostrils*] If the terms of this verse seem higher than befit Zedekiah, we must remember first that loyalty is not altogether dependent upon the character of the king, and that Zedekiah was "Jehovah's anointed" (cp. what David says of Saul, 1 S. xxvi. 9, &c.; 2 S. i. 14), and the representative of the family of David. But secondly, he is not set before us as a vicious king, but rather as a man who wished to do right, but had not strength enough of character to stem the evil current of his times. His conduct about the slaves, Jer. xxxiv, 8, was that of an upright man, and he had been even bold in shewing kindness to Jeremiah. And now that the state was falling he was as the very breath of life to the fugitives, who would have no rallying point without him; whereas if he escaped, they might with him have found a refuge among some of the neighbouring nations, and as long as they had a king of David's line all hope of prolonging their national existence would not seem lost. Possibly the extreme remoteness of the actual relationship of Shealtiel to Zedekiah may have been one of the reasons why the kingly office was not restored after the return from Babylon. His line had sunk down to the position of plain uncrowned citizens from the time of David onwards.

in their pits] The words are metaphorical, suggesting that Zedekiah was hunted like a wild animal, and driven into a pitfall.

21, 22. The prophet ends his elegy with the language of Messianic hope, as Ewald rightly remarks. In *v.* 20 there was blank despair, for the earthly king had fallen; but again hope revives, for Israel cannot really perish. First then Edom, the representative of the Church's foes, is ironically told to rejoice. Rejoice she did maliciously at the capture of Jerusalem, see Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Jer. xlix. 7—22, but her punishment is quickly to follow: for the wine-cup of the divine wrath is soon to pass over to her, and upon it will follow shame and disgrace as of one who in his drunkenness strips himself naked.

22. *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished*] Lit. **Thy iniquity is ended.** This is the result of Judah having borne her punishment; for it is not just to punish twice for the same thing. And therefore Jeremiah adds, *He will not send thee again into captivity*, not meaning thereby that under all circumstances Judah would have an immunity from exile;—for that would depend upon her future conduct:—but that her present guilt being completely expiated, she would have nothing further to fear on its account.

he will discover thy sins] The verb used here comes from the same root as that for *carrying away captive* in the parallel clause. Bp Wordsworth therefore paraphrases "He hath uncovered the sins of Edom, and hath covered those of Israel." To uncover and expose sins is equivalent to punishing them. And thus then as Edom rejoices when the Church is chastised, so is the day of the Church's triumph that also on which the wicked meet with retribution.

CHAP. V. This final chapter consists of the same number of verses as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet, but they no longer begin with the letters in regular order. On the other hand, there is even more strict care as to the form and arrangement of the poem, each verse being compressed into a very brief compass, consisting of two members which answer to one another both in idea and expression. Beginning with a prayer to God to remember their misery, *v.* 1, the rest is mainly occupied with the recapitulation of their sufferings, *vv.* 2—18, which are acknowledged in *vv.* 7, 16 to be the fruit of their own sins and the sins of their fathers, while finally, in *vv.* 19—22, the earnest prayer is renewed that God would not forget them for ever, but restore them to His favour as in olden time.

REMEMBER, O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold our reproach.

2 Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.

3 We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers *are* as widows.

4 We have drunken our water for money; our wood [1] is sold unto us.

5 [2] Our necks *are* under persecution: we labour, *and* have no rest.

6 We have given the hand *to* the Egyptians, *and to* the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.

7 [a] Our fathers have sinned, *and* *are* not; and we have borne their iniquities. [a] Jer. 31. 29. Ezek. 18. 2.

8 Servants have ruled over us: *there is* none that doth deliver *us* out of their hand.

9 We gat our bread with *the peril of* our lives because of the sword of the wilderness.

[1] Heb. *cometh for price.*
[2] Heb. *Our necks are we persecuted.*

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1. *what is come upon us*] Lit. *what* **has happened** *to us.* This verse forms the introduction to the recital of their *reproach, i.e.* the national disgrace which had befallen them.

2. *Our inheritance is turned to strangers*] The Hebrew word rendered *turned* means *transferred*, made over to. The inheritance was the land of Canaan, Lev. xx. 24.

our houses to aliens] Or, *to foreigners.* The difficulty made by some commentators about the houses in connection with what is said in Jer. lii. 13 of their destruction, is an instance of over-refinement. Whatever houses there were throughout the whole land of Judæa became the property of the Chaldæans upon their conquest of the country. And naturally *land* and *houses* are coupled together.

3. *our mothers* are *as widows*] The particle *as* suggests that the whole verse is metaphorical. Our distress and desolation is comparable only to that of fatherless orphans or wives just bereaved of their husbands.

4. *our wood is sold unto us*] Or, *our wood* **cometh to us for price** (marg.). The rendering of the A. V. spoils the carefully studied rhythm of the original. The bitterness of the complaint lies not merely in their having to purchase the necessaries of life, but that it was their own property which they had thus to buy. The captives were doubtless closely watched, and not allowed to stray from the place where they were detained in preparation for their removal to Babylon, and thus could obtain wood and water only by paying for them.

5. *Our necks* are *under persecution*] Lit. *Upon our necks we were pursued, i.e.* we were pursued so actively that our enemies seemed ever so close upon us as to be leaning over our necks ready at once to seize us.

we labour] **We were wearied**, *there was no rest for us.* We were tired out with being thus chased incessantly, and no opportunity was allowed us of refreshing our weary frames.

6. to *the Egyptians*, and to *the Assyrians*] *We have given the hand* **to Egypt, to Assyria**, &c. *To give the hand* means to submit oneself, see note on Jer. l. 15. For mere food to keep ourselves from dying of hunger, we have submitted to bondage now to Egypt, now to Assyria. Absolutely it was Babylon that had just destroyed their national existence, but Jeremiah means that all feelings of patriotism were crushed, and the sole care that remained was the selfish desire for personal preservation. To secure this the people would readily have submitted to the yoke either of Egypt or Assyria, which are mentioned as the great powers from which in their past history they had so often suffered. The mention, however, of these powers shews that the description is ideal rather than actual.

7. and are *not; and we...*] Or, **they are not**; *we have borne their iniquities.* Our fathers who began this national apostacy died before the hour of punishment had arrived. We who have continued their sin, *v.* 16, have had to bear alone the fatal consequences.

8. *Servants*] *i.e.* **Slaves.** It was no uncommon thing in oriental countries for slaves to attain to high office, see note on Prov. xix. 10, and to have to submit to such rule would be a terrible degradation to a high-spirited Jew.

9. *We gat*] Or, **We get**, lit. bring in, *our bread at the peril of our lives.* We are not to suppose that all the calamities here mentioned happened to all alike; rather in a succession of curt, unconnected sentences, the prophet enumerates the chief distresses, which pressed heavily some on one portion of the people and some on another. This verse apparently refers to those who were left as delvers and vinedressers in the land, and who, in gathering in such fruits as remained, were exposed to incursions of the Bedaween, here called *the sword of the desert.* We can easily imagine that during and after the siege these desert tribes invaded many portions of the land of Judæa and pillaged the defenceless inhabitants, to whose sufferings the Chaldæans would be utterly indifferent.

Psal. 119. 10 Our [b]skin was black like an oven because of the [a]terrible famine.

vrs, or, ms.

11 They ravished the women in Zion, *and* the maids in the cities of Judah.

12 Princes are hanged up by their hand: the faces of elders were not honoured.

13 They took the young men to grind, and the children fell under the wood.

14 The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their musick.

15 The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.

16 †The crown is fallen *from* our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned!

† Heb. *The crown of our head is fallen.*

17 For this our heart is faint; for these *things* our eyes are dim.

18 Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.

19 Thou, O LORD, [c]remainest for

[c] Psal. 9. 7 & 29. 10. & 102. 12 & 145. 13

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10. *Our skin...*] This verse is highly poetical, *Our skin* **is fiery red like an oven because of the fever-blast** *of famine*. The verb rendered *fiery red* is used of the warm glow of love in Gen. xliii. 30, 1 K. iii. 26, and of the kindling of the feelings in Hos. xi. 8. Its sense is fixed here by its being compared to the action of a furnace. For the word translated *fever-blast* see note on Ps. xi. 6, where the A.V. has *horrible tempest*.

11. *They ravished*] **They humbled**, cp. Gen. xxxiv. 2 (marg.).

12. *Princes are hanged up by their hand*] This most probably means that after the princes had been put to death their bodies were hung up by the hand to expose them to public contumely. With this agrees the next clause, *the faces of elders are not honoured, i.e.* old age no more availed to shield men from shameful treatment than the high rank of the princes. Such treatment of conquered enemies was not uncommon in ancient warfare. Cp. for instance the boast of Sennacherib, who says of the people of Ekron, "The chief priests and noblemen I put to death, on stakes all round the city I hung their bodies; the people of the city with their wives I gave to slavery." 'Records of the Past,' i. 38.

13. *They took the young men to grind*] Or, *The young men* **have borne the mill**, the word rendered *to grind* in the A.V. really meaning a *hand-mill*. The young men—properly those of the legal age for military service—have carried the mill, and, as thus it was given into their charge, we may conclude that they had also to grind the corn, a menial and laborious task usually performed by slaves, cp. Isai. xlvii. 2.

and the children fell under the wood] Or, *and lads have stumbled under* burdens of *wood*. By lads are meant youths up to the age of military service, see note on Jer. i. 7. The wood which they had to carry was possibly intended to bake the bread of the Chaldæan soldiers. The whole verse complains that the most menial labour was exacted of the Jewish children.

14. *from the gate*] The gate was the place not only for public gatherings, but where the older men met for conversation. It was their lounge, and all that happened was there talked over. Thus business and pleasure were both abandoned: the old had ceased to chat, and the young to play music—that mentioned in this verse being the playing upon stringed instruments.

15. With this verse cp. Jer. vii. 34, and Ps. xxx. 11.

16. *The crown is fallen* from *our head*] Lit. *The crown of our head is fallen, i.e.* that which was our chief ornament and dignity is lost. This primarily would be the independence of the nation, but it would include all that gave them rank and honour. In the second clause of the verse their loss of national existence is ascribed no longer to the sins of their ancestors, as in *v.* 7, but is acknowledged to be the just punishment of their own misdoings.

17. *For this our heart is faint*] Or, **has become** *faint*. And so in the next clause, *for these things our eyes* **have become** *dim*. *For this, i.e.* for the loss of our crown, for our being now an uncrowned nation, one conquered and no longer free. This is the main point, but the prophet adds *for these things*, for all these humiliations and sorrows which our overthrow has brought with it, and which have been detailed above.

18. *the foxes walk upon it*] Or, **jackals** *walk upon it*, see note on Ps. lxiii. 10. As these animals live among ruins, and shun the presence of man, it shews that Zion is now laid waste and deserted of her inhabitants.

19—22. Having thus recapitulated the sorrows of God's people, the prophet ends with a short but earnest prayer. In *v.* 19 he acknowledges God's eternal sovereignty: why

ever; thy throne from generation to generation.

20 Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, *and* forsake us [t]so long time?

21 [d]Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

22 [l]But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.

[t] Heb. *for length of days?*

[d] 18.

[l] C. *wi ut. jec*

then, he asks, is this righteous government suspended, and Israel so long forgotten, *v.* 20? Then feeling that the cause is sin, he prays for converting grace that so they may come back to Jehovah, *v.* 21. Can it be that God has utterly forsaken His people? No. That is impossible. God cannot be angry for ever, and therefore there is still hope, *v.* 22.

19. *Thou, O* LORD, *remainest for ever*] Or, *Thou, Jehovah,* **reignest.** The Hebrew is lit. *Thou sittest*, for the meaning of which see note on Ps. lxi. 7. In the second clause there is an implied contrast, being the earthly sanctuary in ruins, and the heavenly throne in unchangeable glory.

20. *Wherefore...*] *i.e.* if God's sovereignty is thus uninterrupted in heaven, why is this breach in it made on earth? Why is His kingdom here below abandoned for so very long?

21. *Turn thou us...*] A quotation from Jer. xxxi. 18. The prophet prays that God would grant His people grace to repent. Upon this would follow their restoration, and the renewal of their days as of old, *i.e.* the restitution to them of all the privileges, temporal and spiritual, which they had enjoyed in the golden age of the nation.

22. *But thou...*] Lit. *Unless thou hast utterly rejected us*, unless *thou art very wroth against us.* This is stated as a virtual impossibility. God's anger can be but temporary, Ps. xxx. 5, and therefore the very supposition is an indirect expression of hope.

To make the book more suited for public reading, *v.* 21 is repeated in many MSS. intended for use in the synagogue. Though virtually the language of hope, yet in outward form *v.* 22 speaks of the possibility of an utter rejection through God's wrath, and therefore *v.* 21 is to be read again to remove so painful a thought. The same rule is observed in the synagogue with the two last verses of Ecclesiastes. Isaiah, and Malachi. But the message of God to the soul, even in threatenings, is ever in truth one of comfort.

END OF VOLUME V.

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